

# MACLEAN'S

CANADA'S WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE | [www.macleans.ca](http://www.macleans.ca)

MAY 3 2004

## THE KNOW-IT-ALL NEIGHBOUR

**EXCLUSIVE**  
**CANADA-U.S. POLL**

When it comes  
to Americans,  
Canadians have  
all the answers

BY JONATHON  
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## MACLEAN'S



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## ALL DEPENDS ON THE VIEW

The U.S. is a superpower. We think we're a "moral superpower." That's a problem.

**QUEBEC PREMIER** Jean Charest has a story that he tells about teaching young people the importance of different perspectives. Whenever he has school-age visitors at his office, he takes the children to a window and asks them to describe their impressions of the scene outside. Then he takes them to another window, and asks them to do the same. Invariably, the students highlight different things—even though the windows overlook

the same scenery. The lesson, Charest tells them, is to remember there are different ways of seeing the same situation.

Charest used that story in a speech in Toronto last week to illustrate the importance of the country's bilingual and bicultural heritage. You can easily apply that analogy to Canada-U.S. relations—the subject of our cover package this week. For two nations that share so many qualities, we look on the world—and each other—in often dramatically different ways. One reason, of course, is that one of those nations is the world's superpower, with the strengths, interests, abilities and ego issues that implies. As for Canadians, we prefer ourselves too much to sit in powered places in a "moral superpower," as Jonathan Gershon wrote (page 24) in his piece on the Bush office poll.

Those speakers have been accustomed following the events of 9/11. One result is a cooling of feelings—on the Canadian side. As Gershon writes: "The new sense of fairness is disappointing, especially to North's border." More than two-thirds of Canadians say that the U.S.'s reputation has worsened globally over the last decade, and 35 per cent of respondents feel they are more negative about America since 9/11. But despite that, most Americans continue to look at Canada with an attitude that might best be described as benign indifference.

There are several issues to be down from that. One—just as true for American looking at Canada—is that it's almost always wrong to judge a country's attitudes solely through the filter of its media. If you listen to the five News Network, for example, and its nightly newscasters in U.S. talk radio, you'd conclude that only junky parties in New York and Hollywood oppose the war—and all Americans despise "Canadians," as

“What we regard as friendly criticism can seem to others like nagging from a know-it-all neighbour.”

we've just as fondly known. Our poll makes clear that's not so. But editorial newspapers in this country supported the U.S. effort in Iraq in advanced news polls taken even as Canadians are opposed.

One key to civilized debate lies in recognizing that the orderable nature of things is a discussion as much as it is a truth as what they say. John Kerry is credible in his criticism of Bush's approach to Iraq precisely because he's a discredited veteran of the Vietnam War. Bush, who didn't see Canada, has a hard time recognizing him as a traitor. And it's one thing for Americans to criticize White House policy in Iraq; it's quite another for outsiders. If the Canadians, to do so—because we're not the ones making Iraq live. What we regard as friendly criticism can as easily seem to others like nagging from a know-it-all neighbour—which is why, perhaps, 12 per cent of Americans say they have a more negative view of Canada than they once did, even as another 13 per cent say their opinion has improved. As Charest would say, depends which window you look out from.

Anthony Wilson-Smith

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## MACLEAN'S

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"It is encouraging that you would seek out five committed Canadian pastors and recognize their contributions to our culture and society."

—William Gahm, Montreal, N.S.

#### Equality of faith

Thank you for your cover story "Heroes of the cross" (April 22). So much of the time, I am frustrated with our Canadian media because of its fear of being perceived as "too heavily incorrect." This also often leads to a bumpy picture about all religions, except Christianity and all its various media, trying to be "politically correct," criticizing Christianity as a faith and Christian leaders as faith. Therefore, even though I do not agree with all of the opinions in the article, I am very appreciative that you had the unusual fortitude to publish on Christianity—and that you were positive about it.

John B. Rowland, Vancouver, B.C.

I am a Christian Aboriginal physician who had the great honour of hosting Margaret Wheatley, one of the pasters profiled in your cover story, speak at my medical school during a presentation on culture, health and illness. Her gentle spirit only shows something under strength that is born of a living faith in Jesus Christ. I wish more of us would have the courage to follow her example and the example of the other leaders of the faith portrayed in your recent issue.

Dr. Ben Wilson, Calgary

It was great to see a positive approach to Christianity in the mainstream press.

Brianne Parsons, Toronto

#### Down with nanny

You're bailing with "The income trap" article, right? Couldn't Katherine Maddox come up with a better example of how our government stings its taxpayers other than to seize about a woman who voluntarily quit her job to stay at home with her children, then whines because Ottawa won't foot the bill for her nanny/personal finance, April 22?

Pam Williams, Arto, Ont.

Let me get this straight: a 36-year-old woman, who left the workforce in 2002 because she was having a baby and was not planning to return to her job, is angry be-



cause in 2003 she is not able to write off her nanny for income tax purposes? Personally, I'm glad that our tax laws prevent the rich from having the use of as pay for their unnecessary nannies.

Lisa Holte, Toronto

Your article about income tax "filling in" underscores the need to employ tax professionals to help guide the taxpayer through this variable quagmire of convoluted and often unstable regulation. Contrary to your list, you are permitted to carry back capital losses for up to three years, not one year, and forward forward, not seven years.

Eric Mall, Smithers, B.C.

#### Listen up, Martin Here's one man's price for another Liberal vote

If Paul Martin wants Alvin Martin to join his cabinet, this is what he has to do: "I want my money returned to the treasury," demands Calgary's Martin. "I want the commodities that stole it burned in the incinerator of public money. And most of all, I want heads on pikes outside the palace gates. I want arrests, trials and convictions." Over to you, Mr. M.

#### Enter the boor

"Boor: Antisocial" (Covers, April 5) explored the mores of the current lack of civility. Here's another thought: with the rise of the women's rights movement, women wanted to establish their independence and strength. As a result, some feminists scorned traditional goatees such as holding a door open to passersby and condescending. A few men were even repulsed when they thought they were just being polite. This simple act of courtesy should be seen not as demeaning, but just as good-natured attempts to keep the wheels of human relations moving smoothly.

Alan Macdonald, Lacombe, Ont.

I am a Grade 12 student who is surrounded with the number of rude comments that flood the halls on a daily basis. It seems as though no one can hold a conversation anymore without a racist word, insult or rude comment. I pray the people who mock just make others to boost their own ego and make themselves feel better. In comparison to previous generations, the morals and values of today's society have drastically changed, which leads us to the question: Where did we go wrong?

Marissa Gibson, Toronto

Rudeness began at home. Despite current attitudes about fostering a child's self-esteem is the detriment of discipline, in wartime and the definition of rudeness, children, like us adults, require and expect these dimensions in their life to function properly in a polite society. If behaviour does not correct itself.

Ben Robit, Mount Pearl, Nfld.

#### Tabloid fodder

I was surprised and disappointed to see a full page in your magazine devoted to Adair's "energy hear" (I grabbed a pulsating light," April 12). How could you run an unimpressive, sensationalizing story about an unnamed teenager who claims to cure diseases like cancer by sending his thought waves through space? Extraordinary claims demand extraordinary evidence. Journalists, who are supposed to be skeptical, must ask hard questions, check claims and evaluate the veracity of the stories people tell them. We as readers expect you to deliver facts. Do the editors at Maclean's really think that Adair connects to "auras" and sends



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In another sweep, Tour's Canadian edition, including the contest, has reached the top of its ratings. The latest issue, featuring a story on the impact of the 2008 election, was the most popular issue in the Canadian market, according to Nielsen. The contest, which is open to all Canadians, is a 5-star contest. For more information, visit [www.macleans.ca/macleanscontest/](http://www.macleans.ca/macleanscontest/).

## MACLEAN'S BEHIND THE SCENES



### A JOURNALIST WHO DIGS POLITICS

"I love covering politics," says Maclean's National Correspondent Mary Jagan, whose weekly columns dig at the roots of thorny subjects from health-care reform to Canada's relationship with the U.S.

Last week, Jagan took to the stage—instead of her usual, more comfortable spot behind the political scenes—when she accepted the coveted Hyman Solomon Award for Excellence in Public Policy Journalism.

The award is from the Public Policy Forum, an Ottawa-based organization that promotes excellence in government and public sector reform. The honour commemorates the late Hy Solomon, a long-time Ottawa bureau chief for *The Financial Post* who had a knack for reporting on the interplay between the public and private sectors.

"This is a huge honour for Mary and about as good as it gets for anyone who writes about the public life of the country," says Maclean's Publisher Paul Jones.

Jagan didn't know she was even up for the award until she received a congratulatory phone call from former vice-president Anita Mayer in March.

"We award it to a journalist who can explain public policy and what it means to Canadians as a clear and factual way," says Mayer. "Mary looks at various points of view, rather than only presenting one narrow opinion."

Jagan has been associated with Maclean's for two decades, originally covering Parliament Hill, where she crossed paths with Solomon in the press corps. "He was a generous colleague," she says.

Today, Jagan writes her weekly column from her home office near Toronto's High Park. She says her approach is to try and look just the political seeping that comes with the turf to unearth the real underlying issues.

"My job is to be curious," she says, "which makes me really enjoy going to work every day."

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## UPFRONT



### Police | The blues for a cop family—and a big-city force

The measurements are getting harder to equal him. With such awe, coroners' officers do not die the "miserable" and promise to go to the bottom of things. Chief John Farnese first issued the law in January 1991, and the coroners' officers' drug squad officers shook the country's largest police force. Last week, he was back to the coroners in a working round of all-glassers employed in training new batch of officers in procession makers and coroners' funeraling schemes.

This time, the investigations were particularly troubling because they involved one of Toronto's most prominent law enforcement families. Among those named in published reports are two sons of former chief William McCracken, who headed the force from 1989 to 1999. One of them, Bill, has been suspended from his position as a detective constable in a downtown plain-

clothed chief McCracken with four kids in uniform in 1991. From left, James, Colton, Bill Jr. and John.



McCracken is leading off an inquiry

clothes unit while the three low in town allegations that officers were shooting down boys in the city's entertainment district. Another, Mike McCracken, is reportedly under investigation over connections to the now-dead former owner of a used car dealership whom police suspect was loaned money and handling stolen vehicles. Mike McCracken had been a director of the city's powerful police association, whose president, Rick Milne, was fired last week to leave his position on, generally which it emerged he, one, is under investigation.

Farnese pledged to "make sure the whole system of justice was brought into question" by this case, and is sending out calls for an outside inquiry. But with over seven Toronto officers under scrutiny, and a chief who insists against all visible evidence that the problem is confined, the justice system is already looking pretty solid. CHARLIE BULL

## ScoreCard



**DOONESBURY**  
Cartoonist Gerry Trudeau cut teeth on *Wet Hot*, now provides brutally honest view of last war, last week. G.D.'s helmet beaded rain most, but try in combat. At least one U.S. paper didn't put star: seems good when cuts too close to the bone.



**BASIC FACTOR**  
University of Toronto study concludes women looking at beautiful female models may be bolstering self-image. Curiously, males who do stare get hit different response from female sexual until the cold shoulder.



**BUSINESS PAGES**  
Headline in *Antarctic Post*, a Canadian newspaper: "Can West Q2 earnings profits up 10%." Headline came day in *Antarctic Globe and Mail*: "Canwest reports huge loss." *Antarctic paper* says like any other: truth is the first casualty.



**JACQUES PARLANT**  
Spilled the perfume on surfaces with limited-edition red from his beach anyway. Tearing away: touch of bitterness and hints of last-in-month, but constant. In time: suggests growing resentment.



## Mansbridge on the Record



## THE JOYS OF PUCK FEVER

No other country in the world gets this game and its traditions the way we do

**GROWING UP** in Ottawa in the late 1950s meant making a decision that could last a lifetime: were you going to cheer for the Leafs or the Habs? Those were the days of the old national NHL, where Toronto and Montreal were the only two Canadian cities in the league, and if you wanted to cheer Canadiana, there were no other choice. I took the tough choice. The Leafs weren't making the playoffs in those days, and Montreal was, so it looked like a no-brainer. But I remember the delight, no matter the score, of falling asleep while listening to Foster Hewitt on my little red transistor radio—the one shaped like a hockey stick.

Last year, when my son was 3, he started watching *Hockey Night in Canada* while sitting on my lap. He didn't really know what was going on at first, but before long he caught on, and it soon came time for him to make his decision. We were sitting on the couch one Sunday night when Montreal hosted Toronto, and I told him, simply bracing all this on my experience, that it was time to decide between the team in red and the team in blue. He chose red, and I said, "You're going to have a rough time at school, son." Now, at the much more sophisticated age of 4½, he's far more knowledgeable about hockey and Leafs. He was informed of into making the early choice before he'd been given enough time to do some on our research. While his firm in his belief that Joe Theodore is an "awesome" goalie, he has decided that Eddie Belfour is even better, "really" and I owned he's less on skidding holding the red for the blue. Dad's trying to stay neutral.

“**Temper tantrums, punches were thrown—but minutes later the players were smiling and wishing each other the best.**”

One great thing about all this acknowledging is a scene is played out on thousands of living room screens across the country, and you go to see it in Canada, France or Ontario's Leafs, Senators or Canadiens? No other country in the world gets this game and its traditions the way we do. It's one of the characteristics that makes us truly distinctive from our neighbours—even the ones who also claim hockey as one of their pastimes.

There's a lot to worry about—the way the league treats its players because of backsliding between players and owners, the way violence, ugly and unnecessary, has sullied it, the way questionable moves have made it seem boring at times. To understand how we can all do this is to the national psyche, the national newspaper recently devoted considerable editorial space to laying out ideas of how to make the game better, as an element of what it means to be Canadian.

But while there's a case for concern, there's still a lot to cheer. Perhaps the moment it's the Stanley Cup playoffs. I enjoy them—and for as casual a season that talk of Stanley—as when a series ends, and the two teams line up to shake hands. The first round games this year produced some great, tough, but clean hockey. Tempers did flare, punches were thrown, headshots did take place—but minutes after one of those moments, the players were smiling and embracing each other, wishing each other well, whether it was more hockey or golf awaiting them to coming days. And it looked real.

Who knows where all this will end, but the chance seems better than they have for a while that a Canadian city could make it to the finals, and maybe even have the Cup. Hockey lives in every corner of the country, and it's infectious. After a season worth so much to worry about, it's been sudden and pleasant change. Even for us Leaf fans. **BT**

Mary Mansbridge is Chief Correspondent of CBC Television News and Anchor of *The National*. To comment: letters@national.ca

## FaceTime

## Unrepentant

Mirindelli Venzura, 30, was released from an Israeli prison after serving his 10-year sentence for Friday London's Sunday Times that Israel was developing atomic weapons at the Dimona nuclear facility where he had worked. He arrived with a cause unfilled—a to make Israeli-occupied land him to leave, where he was held and



a truck found to stand trial. Venzura is a leader, the spokesman Venzura is seen as a hero by the international peace movement.



## Hockey between

Depending which version you believe, David Frost (right) is either a kindly father figure who got involved in the sport with a head injury from his days in the military, or he's a highly manipulative player's agent and the target of a hitman hired by his most prominent rival: coach. Frost denies he was the



one in the first. But he was the only person in Boston's St. Louis apartment when the Blues for which he was and got involved in the sport with a head injury from his days in the military, or he's a highly manipulative player's agent and the target of a hitman hired by his most prominent rival: coach. Frost denies he was the



Farrah Khan. She was a bubbly 17-year-old who spent not quite eight months in Canada and seemed to win over all who knew her. All except her

father, Mahomed Arsal Khan, 41, an embittered Pakistani immigrant who came to the country to start a new life and with a set of sugar in 1995. He and his wife Farrah Khan were killed last week of murdering the little girl, whose new friends thought had recently returned to Pakistan for a visit.



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## WORLD

**DETAILED** Two transport trains hauling what was said to be large amounts of dynamite for an irrigation project were blown apart at a railway station in North Korea not far from the border with China. The huge explosion shattered apartment blocks and caused deaths for nearly 20 km, it may have killed or injured more than 1,400 people. The secretive Communist state immediately threw a news curtain around the incident and asked for UN help. Adding intrigue, the incident occurred only hours after the lavish peace train of *Kim Jong Il* passed through the same station, as he returned from high-level talks in China.

**BADLY FOOD** Dozens of Chinese children have died and hundreds of others are showing up in provincial hospital wards with severe malnutrition, the result of a fake infant *nutrition formula* that seems to have had wide spread distribution. It's the latest in a series of counter for mums, from faulty brake pads to medicines, that have been dogging China's race to industrialize.

**REDFLESH** British PM Tony Blair did an about-face and is now promoting a referendum—likely a year away—on whether Britain would be bound by a new European constitution. Seen as a political ploy to put off a dueling issue until after the next election, the move has upset European ob-



## MOMENTS IN MEDICINE

Little wonder why world-famous ballerina, shown here with her husband Don, felt she was worth pains for a full 17 months after surgery to have part of her colon removed. Someone at the Sydney, Australia, hospital had forgotten something.

men, who view Britain's notorious *Blackie process* as the threat that might cause everything to unravel.

**AMERICAN POLITICS** A new book, *Plan of Attack*, by investigative journalist Bob Wood-

ward (of *Wingspread* fame), exploded on the U.S. political scene. Among other things, it claims Saudi rulers promised the Bush administration low gas prices during this year's presidential election period, and that George W. Bush made the decision virtually on his own to go to war with Iraq, with very little input from senior advisers such as Secretary of State Colin Powell, the former general who had serious misgivings about a conflict. Both Powell and Bush were interviewed at length by Woodward for the book.

**MIDDLE EAST** Saudi Arabia's top cleric, Grand Mufti Abdul-Aziz al-Shukr, declared that militant Muslims who kill other Muslims no further their cause will "burn in hell." He was responding to a suicide bombing by an al Qaeda-related group in downtown Riyadh that killed five people, including an 11-year-old girl.

Israel, meanwhile, said it would be fitting each of its 22 *Al passenger* jetliners with \$1.4-billion missile defense systems, while Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said he would no longer uphold his pledge not to harm Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

**NEVERLAND** Pop singer Michael Jackson, 45, was indicted by a grand jury in Santa Barbara, Calif., for child molestation in violating a 12-year-old boy at the singer's Neverland ranch a year ago, news organizations reported. Grand jury deliberations are supposed to be secret. This one will likely lead to a trial later this year.

**CORRUPTION** The UN ordered an inquiry into whether senior UN officials took kickbacks while administering the humanitarian program that allowed Saddam Hussein to sell oil in exchange for food and medicine while his regime was under international sanctions. A Canadian energy executive said the scheme was so corrupt Iraqi officials set before him amounts of cash delivery and had bank accounts in Jordan for the payoffs.

**BRIBED** In a bizarre ruling that could devastate the face of such defendants as former Yugoslav leader Slobodan Milosevic,



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## UPFRONT

the UN war crimes court in The Hague declared the 1995 massacre of Muslims in the Bosnian town of Srebrenica a genocide.

The Canadian House of Commons, meanwhile, with 78 Liberal backbenchers breaking ranks in support, approved a private member's bill acknowledging the 1965 genocide of Armenians by the former Ottoman Empire, angering NATO ally Turkey.

### HEALTH | SCIENCE

**FINDINGS** Canada's birth rate hit an all-time low in 2002, Statistics Canada reported, while **Caesarean births** reached a record high. The Canadian Institute for Health Information said C-sections made up 22.5 per cent of hospital births in 2001, up from 15 per cent in 1980.

A common virus called Epstein-Barr, which most people are exposed to in their lifetime, appears to be the trigger for multiple sclerosis in those susceptible to the disease, researchers at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children said.

**VOICE LIFTS** Joining the makeover crew, surgeons in the U.S. are offering voice lifts for people who want their vocal cords tightened to make them sound as young as plastic surgery has made them look.

### CANADA

**50/50** The family of Maher Arar, the Ottawa engineer who spent an ugly year in a Syrian prison (deported there by the U.S. on suspicion of being a terrorist), is suing the federal government, the RCMP, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service and several Canadian consular officers for \$400 million. His wife, Mona Maugh, is running for the federal NDP in Ottawa South.

While the controversy over the Arar case was in full swing last November, the Cheloni government quietly issued new orders to the Ministries, requiring them to obtain ministerial approval before co-operating with foreign intelligence agencies, the Canadian Press reported.

**POLITICS** Second Robertson's Bernaby Douglas riding association is seeking a replacement for the popular New Democrat while he takes medical leave and awaits possible charges stemming from his having pocketed a prize piece of jewellery from an auction house. A Bernaby jeweller said that,

just before the incident, Robertson had been in his store looking for an expensive wedding ring for long-time partner Max Byrnes.

**50/50** Five coalfield wildfires, the Supreme Court of Canada ordered Embury Gas Distribution Inc., one of Ontario's largest natural gas distributors, to repay thousands of customers for years of late payments (less of five per cent a month—cumulatively over 60 per cent a year). The firm had been approved by the provincial regulator.

**ACQUITTED** Nineteen-year-old pro baseball prospect Cam Rhynes, found guilty last year of robbing and sex from two girls aged 12 and 13 in a case that shocked P.E.I., had his conviction overturned. A P.E.I. Supreme Court judge said there was no evidence Rhynes had incited the girls to have sex, which is what the law requires.

**DRINGS** After a long career in public life—12 years as an M.L.A. seven as an M.P. as an Alberta and a recent stint as chief of staff to Premier Ralph Klein—Pinar Ekizoglu, 50, marked his retirement with a **uniquely private gesture**: he donated one of his lockers in long-time pal Tim Shields, a Grande Prairie welder who had been forced to depend on the pair for the past two years.



### QUITE A BEEF

Angry at another empty walk-out threat to keep them out of the court, some have, striking how-  
ever, found civil servants beefed up their protest in the fourth week of a bitter standoff, thousands staged the 10th day of protest and nearly shut St. John's down for a day. The protest now wants to help strikers look to work.

Mary Jemigan | ON THE ISSUES



## SHOCKER: OUR WHEAT WINS

How the World Trade Organization, in a surprise decision, sided with Canada

**THE HUGE WORRY** about trade deals is that they can act like nuclear reactors, sparking uncontrollable meltdowns, dismantling institutions and disrupting economies. So we have much reason to applaud this month's World Trade Organization ruling on the export habits of the venerable Canadian Wheat Board. Founded in the depths of the Depression in 1918, the board is the sole marketer for Prairie grain destined for export or for human consumption in Canada. The U.S. had complained to the WTO that the board, as a so-called "state trading enterprise," did not behave like a commercial firm, exploiting its monopoly to the detriment of farmers in other nations. In other words, we're not that far from the other side of the coin because we have unfair advantage as a single seller.

To the surprise of many trade experts, the WTO panel, in its extraordinary April 6 ruling, supported the wheat board's export practices. It was not a blanket endorsement: the panel set out six criteria for evaluating the commercial habits of state trading enterprises. But it gave hope to state enterprises everywhere, including provincial utilities that expect power there soon in trade deals to do things differently. Our system for gas export does not have to function exactly like U.S. private firms in order to comply with trade rules.

**"To the anti-globalization people, this ruling says the WTO is not some big, monolithic organization that attacks government policies," notes Charles Brock, trade lawyer Lawrence Herman. "These critics do not have to be because exactly like private sector actors in order to exist. The ruling takes some wind**

out of the sails of the WTO's opponents."

The decision marks the first time that a panel has looked in detail at the rights and duties of state trading enterprises. Its dry, 231-page pronouncement revolves around what constitutes "commercial" conduct. The wheat board's structure passed the panel's test. Farmers elect the majority of its 15-member board of directors, the federal government does not control or interfere in day-to-day operations. Ottawa, for example, cannot tell the board to sell cheap wheat to a nation for political considerations.

The panel then turned to how the board operates. Its mission is to sell as "reasonable" prices with the object of "promoting the sale of grain." The U.S. pointed out, arguing that the board sells at prices that are lower than the best possible price to promote Canadian grain. The panel informed that the board does not have to maximize profit to be a commercial agency. WTO rules do not mean the board "conducts its business exactly like privately held, profit-maximizing, share capital corporations." It can handle exports as long as it acts for commercial reasons.

It is too early for celebrations. The U.S. could still appeal—although it did win its case against Canada's maintenance on import permits for U.S. grain discriminates against American products. And Canada is still awaiting the result of its WTO complaint about U.S. duties of 14.7 percent on our exports of hard red spring wheat. But the ruling confirms the need that less powerful nations have for the WTO—at a time when the U.S. is questioning the usefulness of trade deals and ending the next round of WTO talks. The wheat board's very survival, after 13 U.S. challenges, is insurance to the fact that we need free, rules-based global bodies. Without them, the larger power always holds all the cards. **✶**

Mary Jemigan is a political and policy writer; maryjemigan@meadows-rogers.com

## Passages

**RETURNED** Fadi Fadel, a journey and worker who was held captive for nine days by Iraqi insurgents near Najaf, flew back to his family in Laval, Que.—and a belated 33rd birthday celebration.



The Syrian-born Fadel said he was threatened with death by his captors, who thought him an Israeli spy. But he may go back to Iraq, he said, because the plight of children there is so dire.

**WON** Ian Ferguson, one of the writing Ferguson brothers—selling Wild sound Canadian cities and borders for Madeline's last year—won the Stephen Leacock Medal for humorous writing for his *Village of the Small House*, which he calls "a memoir of sorts."

Meanwhile, the Charles Taylor Prize for Literary Non-Fiction went to *Isabel Higgins*, 60. An Elms, Ont., nurse who lived abroad most of her adult life because of her husband's work, she wrote lyrically about Canada in *Belonging: Home Away from Home*.

**ALING** Pat Burns, 52, the curly-haired Ottawa-area coach who coached the Montreal Canadiens and Toronto Maple Leafs, will undergo surgery and eight weeks of chemotherapy for colon cancer. He made the announcement the day after his cancer tests, the New Jersey Devils, were eliminated from the playoffs.



**SELECTED** Martina Stewart Strait, 70, who dominated women's golf in Canada and abroad during the 1950s and '60s, will enter the World Golf Hall of Fame in St. Augustine, Fla., the first Canadian to be inducted.

**DIED** Norma McWhorter and his twin brother, Ross, founded best-selling *Guerrilla Book of Resistance*, at the height of Guatemalan insurgency, as anti-war barbers. Norma died at 78 of a heart attack while playing tennis at his estate in Walsingham, England. Ross was killed by the IRA in 1973 after offering a reward for the conviction of IRA members.

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Politics | BY JOHN GEORGES



## THE COMING STORM

The Grits are ready to go on the attack. What's a Conservative leader to do?

STEPHEN HARPER is bracing for the worst. The sponsorship scandal has given him a chance to go on the offensive, but he knows the Liberals are plotting to force him to play defence once an election is called. "The nature of Liberal campaigning is that they get in the truck," Harper said a few days before he won the Conservative leadership. "My guess is that they will attack—as they have with my predecessors—my region, my religion, my language, my family. That's what Liberals do." If that sounds a little paranoid, consider reports that the Liberals have recently been pulling to test how voters would react to the message that the Conservatives

have been "taken over by evangelical Christians." Even if the Liberal attack is more than a contradictory line, all signs point to a head-biting campaign. Several Conservative MPs and strategists spoke with Maclean's last week, on condition they not be named, on how they are advising Harper to counter the coming assault. Some of their key ideas:

### AVOID THE TRAP OF TWO-TIER HEALTH CARE.

A confused message on health care in the 2000 campaign tripped up Stockwell. Day

Harper says the Liberals will take on "my region, my religion, my family."

badly. With his Alliance party in favour of a "two-tier" system that would allow the rich to buy better care? Did they want to hand over running the system to the private sector? The Con-

servative line this time is simple, and perhaps surprising: we agree with the Liberals. Harper suggests the 2003 health accord Jean Chrétien signed with the provinces, which allows for-profit firms to deliver medical services as long as those services are covered by provincial health insurance. Letting for-profit firms play a role gives right-wingers some comfort. Agreeing that universal

coverage must be maintained to alleviate broader public anxiety over the future of media. As one Conservative MP quips, "We've got to bug the Liberals on this one."

#### TURN THE Iraq QUESTION BACK ON THE GRIDS

Martin says Clinton's decision to stay out of the Iraq war is an election winner. Liberals will portray Harper as the guy who would have matched Canadian opposition against. There's no denying he favoured joining President George W. Bush's "coalition of the willing." But Harper can fix back

by quoting David Pratt, now serving as Martin's vice-minister, who is a Liberal back-basher argued that Canada should have gone to war. And Martin himself has said: "The only satisfactory outcome was a defeat of Saddam Hussein. Canada's strongest desire was for a swift and just victory by coalition forces." So Harper needs to portray the Liberals as confused, if not hypocritical, on the issue. As well, watch for him to reassess his position with British PM Tony Blair.

rather than Bush, as a bid to offset the pro-American aspect of his policy.

#### CRACK DOWN REALLY HARD ON RECKLESS DISRUPTIONS

The biggest fear of Conservative strategists is that their best lead election place could be blown up by dumb comments from their own candidates during the campaign. They fear that the party's message already fragile in this respect. Instancing would be

Conservative MP to avoid inflammatory remarks that guarantee none of them will break ranks. Potential hot-button topics: abortion (Harper says in a PM he would never hold a referendum on the subject) and homosexual rights (Harper against gay marriage but that's about as far as his policy goes). He needs to stick to the tried and true. He took last fall when MP Larry Spencer said homosexuality should be outlawed. Spencer was fired as family values critic of the old Alliance party and had to leave caucus. Should similar outbreaks occur during the election campaign, the same sort of stern justice must be meted out. If Harper thinks Liberals will exploit public unease about the Conservative's stable social-conservative, Christian-right base of support.

#### DON'T GET LOST IN SPONSORSHIP SCANDAL DETAILS

The sponsorship scandal has been a godsend for the Conservatives. But the danger is that Canadians are growing weary of the affair. The pendulum seems to have swung from the House committee investigating the mess

has generated confusion, not the sort of vivid details that work well in campaign rhetoric. Chuck Guité, the former brewer out at the centre of the controversy, was only the latest to muddy the waters. Harper has to make the case that there's no need to understand every twist and turn to recognize that Guité's story about "paying" out. He must make that a general indictment of Liberal government, not a narrow case

**ADVISERS** are telling him to portray the Liberals as confused, if not hypocritical, on the Iraq war question

against a few Ontario tax-payers. Martin is probably not personally vulnerable to the charge that he is dishonest, but the threat is real. He must not let the scandal distract him from the issues and misstatements involved. Harper is opening to undermine the image of loyalty and compromise the PM carries with him from his years in finance.

#### KEEP THE NON-WESTERNERS IN THE PICTURE

In the crucial Ontario battleground, Liberals will try to paint Harper's party as the old Reform-Belmont movement in disguise. The misdirection is that Harper is still leading a western populist movement, not a true pan-Canadian party. But Conservative strategists doubt that will hurt Harper much. After all, while he has spent most of his adult life in Calgary he did grow up in Toronto and he did live in a rural area. Harper's regional base—outside Ontario—decides to give up easily on his dream of a western electoral breakthrough. Still, Harper needs to offset the lingering sense that he is an Alberta insider, not a national figure. That means leveraging the campaign. They want the new Conservative Party of Canada as well as possible. Nova Scotia MP Peter MacKay, the former Progressive Conservative leader who negotiated the merger with Harper, must be seen frequently as Harper's side. It would help if an Ottawa lieutenant with the same prominence could be generated by election time.

## CHUCK GUITÉ'S STRONG STAND

SO MUCH ANTICIPATION, so little payoff. Chuck Guité, the former brewer and who was the federal government's new-restaurant sponsorship program, was the last of the star witnesses the House public accounts committee was waiting to question in its hearings into the controversy. Opposition MPs hoped Guité would finally provide them with clear testimony proving the government used the program to funnel money to Liberal-friendly advertising firms. Instead, he repeatedly asserted there was any political interference in choosing the Montreal agencies that profited by splashing the maple leaf logo around Quebec on Ottawa's behalf, either while the 1995 election was in session, 1995 re-election. As Conservative MP Jean Lamé left the hearing room last week, after Guité stood his ground through hours of sometimes intense grilling, he summed up grimly, "It wasn't the big day we were expecting."

In fact, it was only the latest in a series of frustrating days for the committee. Previous key witnesses—Joan Pelletier, André Gauthier, Alfredo Sestini—were held up pretty well. Late Guité, each told his own version, but each denied the committee a smoking gun. Guité displayed a much sarser grasp of the fine points of federal contracting policy than the MPs trying to catch him out. When they testified from Auditor General Sheila Fraser's testimony report, which concluded the government didn't get its money's worth for \$200 million that went to advertising and communications firms under the program,



Guité was ready with a different story. He called himself the "winning candidate" in "a misleading."

On his own complaint that millions were spent with scant record-keeping, Guité said that he was never in the least concerned about efforts to gain intelligence about federal strategy in Quebec through access-to-information requests. "The line we have on file, the better."

Guité did come with a complaint about political interference, but it had nothing to do with Fraser's report. He said the office of Paul Martin, then Finance minister, tried to get more agencies selected for the first three tenders for federal contracts. As well, he said Martin's former chief of staff, Terry O'Brien,

recommended Kentville Strategy Group, a consulting firm, to do the work. For a record contract, Opposition MPs jumped on the chance to accuse the former Minister of improper meddling, but the charges, even if true, may be too late to inflict much lasting damage. As for the committee's bid to get to the bottom of the corrupt or wrongly suggested by Fraser's report, its findings have instead often corroborated Fraser's observations. Guité—who argue this scandal isn't as serious as Fraser is stated to testify again today—has answered questions now swirling about his findings. Still, expectations are shifting from the "founding bills" to Justice Bill C-58, sponsored by Martin, to conduct a judicial inquiry into the affair. Donny may begin hearing witnesses until next fall. Will Canadians still be listening? LG






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EXCLUSIVE CANADA-U.S. POLL:

## THE KNOW-IT-ALL NEIGHBOUR

When it comes to America, writes JONATHAN GATEHOUSE, we have all the answers

*"The two leaders, who appeared relaxed with one another and frequently made eye contact, also agreed to work together on the mad cow issue."*

—FROM A CTV NEWS REPORT ON THE FIRST BUSH-BLACK MITHRIN ON JAN. 11 IN BONTON, MEXICO

**THE EXPECTATIONS** have been set so low that just being together in the same room is now considered an accomplishment. Handshakes and smiles are taken as an indication of warming relations. And the use of grace notes qualifies as a major diplomatic breakthrough. When Paul Martin said George W. Bush is down at the White House this week for their first extended summit, Canadians shouldn't hold their breath for significant trade deals, cross-border accords, or even a truly meaningful memorandum of understanding. With the relationship between Canada and the United States plunging toward a historic nadir, the Prime Minister will be lucky to walk away with a nice photo and a souvenir pen.

No matter how the election-bound Libs look to spin it, things have gone sour between old allies, and it has happened during their watch. It's more than the deep divisions over Iraq, or the Canadian public's palpable distance for a Yale cowboy and his conservative policies. Suddenly,

there's no respite to our day-to-day frustrations. We harass American flag waving school kids, and boo their razzmatazz at hockey games. Promises to stand "shoulder to shoulder" after the Sept. 11 attacks have been overshadowed by epithets like "moron" and "beards." Symptoms of a declining friendship are everywhere you look.

Our unofficial advisor to Washington about the war on terror goes mostly unheeded, our small military contributions largely unappreciated. And for from our cherished self-image as the world's "helpful

fiest," a sort of moral superpower, both Democrats and Republicans have come to view us as unhelpful naysayers. Like the know-it-all neighbour who never misses a chance to bend your ear over the back fence or critique your yard work, Canada has become the Mock Hero. The "special" status that we once took for granted, able to withstand even the frustations of disagreement, seems in doubt. Things between our countries are apparently getting worse all the

time. And, the evidence suggests, the trade problem is almost entirely our own.

An exclusive new Merleau's poll probing what Canadians and Americans really think of each other shows this new state of affairs is disproportionately centred north of the border. Sixty-eight per cent of Canadians say the U.S.'s global reputation has worsened over the last decade, while 36 per cent of us say we feel more strongly about America since Sept. 11. (The biggest reasons cited—the Iraq war and George W. Bush.) Asked to pick the world's best neighbour over neighbours to the south, the No. 1 response was "America," with "Mexico" (not necessarily a complimentary close behind). Many of us say Americans are "disgusting" rather than "compassionate." And even though a majority would be willing to immediately commit Canadian troops to defend the U.S. in the event of another attack, only 44 per cent of us "strongly support" the idea.

On the flip side, most Americans remain indifferent to the canucks and shies flinching across the border. Despite more than five years of high-level political conflict, and the best attempts of talk-show flowers to have p. Canada together with "socialist wannabes" of Old Europe, 74 per cent of U.S. respondents say their opinion of our country remains unchanged. Twelve per cent say they think









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survey indicates the number of vocal critics of Canada remains relatively small, many Americans are convinced their media are growing. "Canadians have lost their multibook," says Fred Edwards, a 36-year-old communications supervisor from Tucson, Ariz. ("Socialized, homogenized, feminized, garden warts," he spelled in his original e-mail to the magazine.) Edwards, who has four children in the U.S. military—including a son who's just returned from Iraq and another son and a daughter preparing to ship out—is particularly irritated that Canada refused to join Bush's "coalition of the willing." "It's like being in a bar fight with your friends," he says. "You expect them to back you up."

Others focus on our perceived enfeeblement for decades of comfortable living under the shelter of the American military umbrella. "Because we spent the money on the military, people [here] have to carry on English/Russian or English/German diplomacy," says Mike Rodgers, the 50-year-old pastor of a fundamentalist Baptist church in North Highlands, Calif. An air force veteran, Rodgers admits that Americans don't always stop to consider the news and sensibilities of other nations, but argues his country deserves at least as much thanks as criticism for taking on weighty global responsibilities. "Because we're so powerful and have such a huge gross, everybody around the world knows us—warts and all," he says. "But if there's a serious threat, a halfway America that is expected to respond."

And while Canada's critics remain in the minority, what may be a concern is how many of them are conservative opinion-makers—the National Review, Fox News, and members of Bush's old think tanks like the American Enterprise Institute—with few counterparts about writing us up, it is in the Bushman, as it is.

“According to pollster Michael Marzolino, there's been a big change: We've never seen results this negative.”

“Sweet Canadianism” had never moved even lower on the Internet site, notes Steven Schlein, a Washington public relations consultant. Since about Canadian flights and results, whether it's an MP's speech or protesters picking on a person heckler seen from near Boston, are amplified by the cable channels of talk radio and right-wing Web sites. (The specialty—good news makes the news route—proven by the recent U.S. media coverage of the heroic fire-extinguishing efforts of people in Fredericton, who the previous year sent help back to Canada for a tsunami on March 1.) “In conservative circles, people are extremely down on Canada,” says Schlein. The former aide and press secretary to several Democratic senators says his own opinion, and that of many of his former colleagues, has also changed for the worse since Sept. 11. “I never really saw a gap with France and Germany,” he says. “We’re no longer allies.”

That he told many Canadians take certain pride in making such American out. “We can’t always compare with the prophecies of the world’s most powerful economy and military, we reserve the right to shrug our noses at them. It’s a heavy burden of nationalism—loud-mouthed, big-wing, cockle-eyed with a Midwestern prairie-dance that melts into a big smile as a Sunday morning between the type of politeness forward we once produced to look like now one of our trademarks, and co-opted to sell everything from Macleod’s ads, to Tim Hortons donuts, to Peter Dinklage’s gasoline.

## TAKING THE PULSE

**38%** of Canadians say their attitude toward the U.S. has worsened since 9/11. Of these, **45%** say this is because of the war in Iraq or dislike of the Bush administration.

**12%** of Americans say their attitude toward Canada has worsened. Of those, **47%** say this is because Canada didn't support the war or wasn't committed to fighting terrorism.

**49%** of Canadians see the U.S. as arrogant, bullying or dangerous. **3%** think Americans are funny or humorous.

**45%** of Americans see Canadians as tolerant or respectful. **13%** think we're funny or humorous.

**68%** of Canadians think America's global reputation has worsened over the past 10 years. Only **2%** think it has improved.

**9%** per cent of Americans think Canada's reputation has worsened. **25%** say it has improved.

Our obsessive need to poke and prod every aspect of our relationship with the U.S. in its our books, cinema, music and media—including, obviously, this very magazine. It's tempting to call it our greatest cultural misadventure—except that, technically speaking, the other party should know that you're comparing with them.

The question is whether our delight in twerking the U.S. is finally backfiring. We've always been able to ride our poor media's tanhums with past administrations, noting for metropolitan White House Butts kept it still fresh in the American consciousness, and usually the seat that crumples all others, how different would a Democratic president be? John Kerry, rock and rock with Bush in cross-agency polls, has already said he plans to reduce the American press case in Iraq by shifting the burden to allies. Will Canadians suddenly be willing to wade deeper into the Middle East just because we prefer the person who is sitting?

Dan D. Jones, a retired U.S. diplomat who served in Ottawa during the Clinton years, says the “foreign American confidence” that has long worked in Canada's favour is in danger of evaporating. “You can poke and push and push, but eventually things will snap back,” he says. The disproportionate military contributions that were us in Iraq or Washington—the world war, Korea—are fading into history, while our anti-Americanism is rising and almost re-flores. “The top dog is never loved,” says Jones. “But what we want is respect and a recognition that we have the right to act in our own interests as we perceive them.”

At the same time, the cordially married national dance of a Canada that provides a heavy weight on the international stage is becoming increasingly hollow. Despite recent budget increases, our foreign aid spending will make closer to the bottom than the top of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries in terms of GDP. The federal government is finally listening to the Canadian military in search of the breaking point. When it comes to international peacekeeping, as they've proudly done on our own, the latest figures rank Canada 38th of 94 nations along with the UN-led missions, lagging far behind members like Ghana, Ethiopia, Uganda and Bangladesh. And the post-Cold War promise of new international institutions that would allow us to play a

*“Yes, it's a one-page legal summary that was delivered on time. Well, I just thought I should alert the media.”*



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“Truth be told, many Canadians take a certain pride in raising U.S. ire—it’s a berry brand of nationalism.”

thriller allies such as Belgium, Denmark and the Netherlands “prosperous, capitalist, democratic, but not able to contribute much,” says Sands. “Which is OK as long as they don’t engage in active obstruction of U.S. policies.”

Commoned that we know Americans better than they know themselves, accustomed to inspiring from the sidelines, we have failed to grasp the fundamental change the U.S. has undergone since Sept. 11. Yes, the population is split over Bush and the war in Iraq, says Sands, but it’s largely a debate about tactics in the war on terror, not intent. Most Americans remain viscerally convinced that the threat of terrorism in the Middle East is real, and that time-governing further terrorist attacks is just. Cross-border offensive strikes at the heart of those beliefs—like past policies showing that most Canadians believe U.S. policy is at least partially to

the war in Iraq is Canada’s No. 1 belief with Americans.

If the U.S. was attacked by its enemies, 75% of Canadians support Canada troops being deployed in America’s defense.

If Canada was attacked, 84% of Americans support their troops being sent to help us.

blame for 9/11—does get mixed, and remembered. “Americans are very generous as a people,” says Sands. “But there comes a time when the debate shifts and the public starts talking about gratitude. That’s the dark side of the American attitude.”

The relationship between Canada and the United States is far more complex than how it appears, or even to governments, goes deep. Millions of people cross the border each month for work, vacation or simply to visit family. It’s a peculiar intimacy that has survived more than 200 years of wars and wars, boundary skirmishes, trade disputes, over a war. But the feelings of the Canadian public—sustained indifference on one side, and a growing antipathy on the other—suggest even greater challenges ahead. We’ve long needed them more than they need us. Mirrored sentiment with Bush’s four-page memo to the White House, an American’s grappling with foreign wars and domestic fires, is likely to be a brief for the back of the A-10. What Canadians may well ask themselves is how much further down the depth of the divide they’re willing to fall.

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## READY FOR JIHAD

if Iraqi rebels unite, America will face its worst nightmare, writes ADNAN R. KHAN

It was another bloody week in Iraq as suicide bombers struck in the southern city of Basra, killing some 70 people, including more than 30 children on their way to school. Those attacks, as well as another in the Saudi Arabian capital of Riyadh that left four dead, were blamed on al-Qaeda-connected militants. They came as U.S. forces were trying to establish a Sunni uprising in Falluja and east between in Najaf, where they have been involved in a standoff with militant cleric Muqtada al-Sadr and his Shi’ite militia. Maclean’s Contributing Editor Adnan R. Khan, who is based in Baghdad and currently on assignment in Iraq, filed this report on al-Sadr and the threat he and his forces pose.

“SADR WINS.” That’s the headline of the new Iraqi newspaper of Muqtada al-Sadr, who is still operating in Iraq, that would probably have been its headline last week. Those words were certainly on the lips of his followers after U.S. forces agreed to pull back from their strategic positions on the outskirts of Najaf in southern Iraq. Al-Sadr has been held up

in Shi’ite Islam’s holiest of cities for nearly three weeks, dodging an armed assault for complicity in the murder of a U.S. cleric last year—and calling on Iraqis to rise up against the occupation. U.S. authorities still

Supporters of militant Shi’ite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr threaten all-out religious war.

now to capture or kill the 31-year-old cleric, but throughout the standoff al-Sadr has been defiant, even threatening suicide attacks against coalition forces.

What comes next could prove to be a defining moment for post-war Iraq. The U.S. attack on Najaf marks a critical stage in the occupation. With a smaller deal in the city of Falluja, deamizing, and U.S. forces preparing for what could be a major confrontation, defining tensions in Najaf become a top priority before the coalition faced the possibility of a wider insurgency. The stakes in Najaf are high. As La. Gov. Ricardo Sanchez, denouncing American involvement in Iraq, said: “The problem of Sadr is bigger than Sadr.” It took down to refugees

Fighting the Mahdi militia in a holy city would be devastating.

But the chilling prospect of Iraq's insurgency becoming as all-out religious war remains. For weeks, al-Sadr's representatives thronged the Shia-dominated south have been in coining his followers to resist the occupation as religious grounds. "Death is paradise," Sherk John al-Khaz, al-Sadr's spokesman, is quoted at the mosque in Rafia, 30 km north of Najaf, during recent Friday prayers. "Sunni and Shia must unite against the great Satan." And the people were listening.

In smaller cities, and in Sadr City on Baghdad's eastern fringes, heavily armed fighters—members of al-Sadr's newly formed Mahdism—stockpiled weapons. On April 2, they ousted Ukrainian troops in Kut, a small Shia town on the banks of the Tigris River 200 km southeast of Baghdad. "We are keeping the peace now," Sherk Abdul Jassid, al-Sadr's 30-year-old representative, proclaimed some of the Mahdi headquarters in the town's market district. "If anyone wants to fight us, we are ready." In Rafia, one Mahdi fighter declared that his men had Spanish moans centered "like rabbits." Sadr City's wall between ethnic calm and fierce fighting. And all the while, the dissent over the occupying forces in crescent—on did the rhetoric flowing from al-Sadr's locations.

In the holy city of Karbala, during the Ashura festival commemorating the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, one of the most revered of Shia saints, al-Sadr's representatives evoked religion to justify the Mahdi uprising. "This is the time for the return of al-Mahdi," he said, referring to the messianic figure in Shia tradition whose return will mark an era of peace and prosperity for Shia worldwide. "Sherk Muqaddas was told in a dream that the time has come." What told this to al-Sadr was up to interpretation—some said it was an angel, others hinted it was al-Mahdi himself—but no one dared question the veracity of the vision.

The 34-year-old representative, who refused to give his name, preferring instead to be called simply "the cleric," went on to proclaim that Iraq's Muslims, Sunnis and Shias alike, were united in the cause. "We're all Sunnis and Shias," he said. "There is only one God, and all the Americans want to kill Muqaddas, that they have to kill al-Sadr." He charged Amer al-Sadr, the Sunni extremist group connected to al-Qaeda and based in



This picture of U.S. soldiers' coffins aboard a cargo plane is one of 360 government photos that were released to a Web site and picked up by news outlets, defying a Washington ban

northern Iraq, had sent a letter to his office announcing its support for the Shia uprising (Amer al-Sadr is widely believed to be behind the most devastating bombings over the past year, including the attack last week in Basra). "They've sent 200 fighters to Karbala," he claimed. "They've reached into the city and are waiting for the call to jihad."

The possibility of Iraq's various anti-coalition forces uniting could be America's worst

nightmare. Up to now, the Sunnis have been in disarray, with the closest semblance of unified resistance, in Falluja, contained by a constant U.S. military offensive. The bulk of Sunni attacks have been uncoordinated, sometimes opportunistic roadside ambushes that have had little impact on the occupation as a whole. Meanwhile, al-Sadr's Mahdi army, a rising organization of up to 10,000 disarmed youth armed with

rocket-propelled grenades, heavy machine guns and the ubiquitous Kalashnikov assault rifles, have so far provoked little serious resistance in the overwhelming majority of capabilities of their American opponents. Mahdi fighters may have taken Sadr, but their support there was brief. U.S. units, backed by 1,000 troops, razed Sadr's way to the city to make a day's delay.

## WHAT BUSH DIDN'T WANT AMERICANS TO SEE

TAM SILICO says she wasn't politically motivated—she only wanted the families of U.S. military personnel killed in an Iraq conflict to know their fallen sons and daughters were being treated with respect in their final ride home. So on April 3, Silico, a 36-year-old native of Tidewater, Va., who was working at Kuwait International Airport, took a photograph of about 20 coffins draped in the Stars and Stripes while they were loaded inside an aircraft's cargo bay. Silico sent the picture home as a friend so it could be published in the *Seattle Times*, which the newspaper did, running the image on the front page of its April 28 issue. That simple act set off a political firestorm.

Ever Washington's controversial ban on public display of coffins at any stage of the return home from the battlefield. Anyday Aircraft Co., Silico's employer, says the Pentagon raised concerns over the Seattle photo. The Pentagon denied any pressure. What ever happened, she's out of a job, and her husband was fired, too.

Such images are not exactly the kind of PR the White House needs. They bring home the fact that more than 700 military personnel have been killed in Iraq so far, and also make memories of the catastrophic U.S. experience in Vietnam. But it got worse for George W. Bush's increasingly embattled presidency. Monday night, a Web site that promoted free speech, used the U.S. President's information act to ob-

tain 360 pictures of coffins from Iraq, taken by the military but never before published. These photos, snapped at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware on Wednesday, the Pentagon said their release was an unfortunate mistake, quickly made their way from the Internet to major news outlets.

The U.S. no-war policy dates back to the first Gulf War. It was loosened during the presidency of Bill Clinton, when he appeared at a number of ceremonies to pay tribute to soldiers who had died in Kosovo. But the rules were again tightened under the Bush presidency in early 2002; only images of individual bodies have been allowed into the

public realm. "The President believes we should always honor and show respect for those who have made the ultimate sacrifice defending our freedoms," said Scott McDevlin, the White House's press secretary.

Critics argue the images were suppressed to avoid stirring up an already highly disgruntled American public opposed to the troubled military action in Iraq. Bush's support has already sunk to 40 per cent, the lowest level of his presidency so far, the numbers for the Democratic challenge. Senator John Kerry, haven't experienced a corresponding jump. They may rise if the tragic homecomings of dead soldiers continue to be splashed across the news. DANYLO HAVALENSKA



**“The uproar over the photos of Silico to lose her job. For good reasons, her husband was fired, too.”**

have opted for a wait-and-see approach, aware that a miscalculation could open the balance between restraint and all-out war.

It may not be long before a violent confrontation becomes inevitable. "These Mahdi really believe they are fighting a holy war," Hassan Abdul Amir, a businessman whose clothes shop overlooks the Iraqi Hussein shrine in Karbala, said during Ashura. "They are not going to stop. They feel they are privileged. Often they'll push their way past other worshippers waiting to pray at the shrine, saying they deserve to be first. They have no respect for our traditions."

After spoke, a large group of al-Sadr supporters marched past Amir's shop, chanting anti-American slogans and brandishing an updated version of the Iraqi flag, replace with references to al-Mahdi and the Imam, in nature of Iraq. Amir could only shake his head. "They don't understand Islam," he said. "Sadr has taken advantage of their experience. He is using religion because he knows their minds are easy to control."

The situation has been in the making for more than a decade: after the collapse of Iraq's education system during the 12-year-long UN imposed economic embargo, many young people, especially those living in poverty in places like Sadr City (and the slums of Baghdad City) and the neglected south of Iraq, turned increasingly to religious studies. The pattern is all too familiar in the Muslim world: impoverished youth are often recruited at schools where an absolute duty to religion is hammered into their minds.

Now, by all accounts, enrollment in the Mahdi army continues to rise, and the strength of U.S. forces at Najaf will likely increase the flow of recruits. A BBC estimate says more than 2.5 million Iraqis—10 per cent of the population—support al-Sadr. If even a fraction of them decide to take up arms, the result could be overwhelming.

The Americans aren't taking any chances; 20,000 troops already deployed in Iraq have been told that their tour will be extended by 90 days. Planners are considering sending as many as 16,000 more. But with coalition partners such as Spain and Honduras heading for the seas, backing up on military might may prove too little, too late. If insurgent tactics is utilized in action, al-Sadr's Shia merge with Sunni fighters, backed by the relentless series of terrorist, Iraq is destined to bleed for more blood shed than it has already seen. ■

rockets-propelled grenades, heavy machine guns and the ubiquitous Kalashnikov assault rifles, have so far provoked little serious resistance in the overwhelming majority of capabilities of their American opponents. Mahdi fighters may have taken Sadr, but their support there was brief. U.S. units, backed by 1,000 troops, razed Sadr's way to the city to make a day's delay.

Her rebellion from can't be everywhere

at once. The Mahdi militia controls other cities such as Diyala, 300 km south west of Baghdad. And in Karbala, youthful fighters roam the streets, waving their Kalashnikovs over their shoulders like battle flags. "We haven't ever begun to fight," al-Sadr's representative there warned. But neither have the Americans, it seems. Faced with a group of fighters who believe they represent the will of God, coalition planners

# LIFE ON THE EDGE

An Israeli family feels lucky despite living next door to the enemy.  
ALEXANDRE TRUDEAU reports on an island of optimism amidst hate.

The Israeli government agreed the area again last week with the assassination of Abdel Aziz Rantisi, the leader in Gaza of the militant group Hamas. The result: gun battles between Israeli forces and Palestinian fighters—and increased tensions throughout the Middle East. Maclean's Contributing Editor Alexandre Trudeau has been working on a series of stories about how people on both sides of the conflict are coping in these troubled times. He filed this report on a Jewish family in the north of the country.

IN DECEMBER, advised by another trip to Iraq, I turned towards that other conflict in the Middle East—the enduring Israeli-Palestinian crisis. I set out to find ordinary people who might take me to, outside many people whose humanity might be cause for some optimism. Heading north to the rich farmlands shared by Israelis and Palestinians, I rode a bus from Afula in Israel, heading for Jotim in the West Bank.

Just before we crossed the border, the bus stopped through a small Jewish farming village—across from private farms known as *moshavim*. It is in the area called the Yotim Valley—the valley of political God. On the north side are the steep hills of Nassereth, on the southern slopes of Jotim. To the east is Mount Golan, where King David hunted the Philistines, so the west is Megiddo, where, it is said, the battle of Armageddon will happen, and in the middle of the valley is some of the best and most ancient farmland in northern Israel.

In part from the Biblical resonance, in part the memory of an old man who got off the bus at the moshav that day (he was draped in ancient eastern cloth and wore a nation-coloured turban), I made me go back to that village when I returned to the area a month later. I approached a group of young men and told them I was a writer who wanted to live and work with a local farming family for a while. Instead of screaming and chasing, they called out to me, saying that that trip for me. The driver of the bus arrived and said he would take me to his sister's family. And just like that, I was sitting in Nahum and Dalia Azar's kitchen, with a plate of food in

front of me. I would end up staying with their family for a month and a half.

**NAHUM WAS** born to Kurdish Jews in northern Iraq. He doesn't know his birthday, but his mother told him he was born when it was raining, and in northern Iraq that means March. When he was a year old, in the early 1950s, Nahum's people rode donkeys from Iraq to Israel, attracted by the promise of the newly created state. The majority of Kurdish Jews settled in a community in the Yotim Valley. When Nahum's father was asked by officials what his surname

would not make a difference. In fairly difficult times for the agricultural sector, the Azars have managed to do well. Though Nahum still does all the farming, his eldest sons, Ofer and Doron, have taken on the management of the farm and have added a produce wholesale business, buying fruit and vegetables from other farms, packaging them and redistributing the produce to restaurants, hotels and lobster houses throughout northern Israel.

Why're all familiar with the idea of the "American dream"—here it is the "Israeli miracle." The Azars are a shining example of it. In the space of a few generations, they have gone from dust and donkey to a life of modern comforts. The brothers are all currently cooking up new business ideas. They are very enterprising and prosper accordingly. Ofer, 31, has built his wife and young child a small house and down the street from his parents' house. His brothers drive nice European cars; all have good jobs. "We are lucky to live with a great father," they tell me—sincerely—but he has given them much and that they must work hard to continue the tradition.

Doron, 36, takes me for an impromptu tour of the area. Outside of the moshav are two Arab villages, recognizable by their flat roofs and slender minarets (in contrast to the orderly array of peaked roofs over a road in Jewish towns). The Arab village are on the border just outside Israel. "They are Arabs," Doron tells me in my confusion, "but they are with us." They don't throw stones or cause problems.

Just beyond these villages is the border. The crossing is an enormous construction site—day up and spidery with makeshift buildings. To either side of the crossing is the newly created security fence: a dozen steel deep-freezing over the hills. Across the border are the beginnings of Jotim, which appears directly up onto the steep hills



in the edge of the valley. The whole Azar family is unopposed about the barrier that now separates them from the West Bank settlements. "As a farmer, you're just less and less self-reliant," Doron says. "There were constant thefts in the area and several men on our farm. One farmer was stabbed to death while in his fields. We even forbade our father to go there alone. Now that is all over. The fence means security."

Times have changed. "We used to go into Jotim to shop," Ofer says. "That was before the firm limits of the last regime and early nineties. Now it's another world." For Ofer, Jotim occupies an especially dark space in his heart. During the first intifada, he served as a photographer and was present to Jotim for over a year. "It's a short walk from my family's house, but it could have been on the other side of the country, that is how dark it seemed." Israeli paramilitaries are notoriously rough lot and Ofer was the top soldier in his outfit, but he remains dis-

tressed with the Azars, who have gone from dust and donkey to a life of modern comforts.

sturbed when talking about his experiences. "It was hell—I told every day when I was over there," he admits.

The Azars are not very political. They are quietly proud of their country and the good fortune they enjoy here. They are conscious that in their small way they have accomplished something, and that that is a country ended both of an ill-fated war. The life of Jotim is an example of the Jewish dream. The building of this country has been a struggle. A generation ago, Nahum fought in the Sinai during the Six Day War. He has a few yellowed photos of himself as a young man in uniform in the desert, standing by the howitzer gun to which he was attached. He is extremely agreeable by his affable grin, they are playful photos. I look them over fondly, enjoying the images of young Nahum. He smiles

as usual, but his eyes are serious as he tells me, "We once shot an Arab but with that big gun from 10 metres away." I do not need to ask what happened to the hit, or whether it was empty at the time.

On one of the rare occasions when we are drawn into a political discussion at the dinner table, the Azars' youngest son, 14 year old Itai, covers his ears. As the talk goes of a real disagreement becomes clear, he bursts out loudly to his father, brother and sister. "Stop it! Don't talk politics!" We happily oblige.

**THE AZARS** are also not very religious. They eat kosher but neither laws and most of the time on the Sabbath. But that is about as far as it goes. When I ask him how he would feel if his family were more strictly religious, he says, "I would love myself." There is no fan in being that religious. Then he begins looking around the kitchen, pointing out the microwave, dishwasher and double door

fridge, telling me they are not supposed to use any of those on the Sabbath, not the television, computer or car. "I like modern life," he adds.

Itzik is a computer whiz. He spends most of his free time playing an on-line shoot 'em up game on his computer, sometimes against counter-terrorists. I ask him what he thinks about the inevitability of serving in the Israeli army, for less than three years away. "I am afraid," he says. "I don't want to shoot at people, or be shot at."

The Amos do not struggle with the past. Mostly, they look farward, they have their burdens, their scars, but they bear them quietly. Israel is a complex tapestry of peoples from different places. The Amos, endemics of Kacbe-



Itzik's valley, near the West Bank border, is a nice peaceful home to both Amos and Jews.

With the burden of all the dreams and sacrifices of his ancestors, Ofir's heart is heavy with the demand of his Jewish identity. He grew up on a religious kibbutz and later joined the army. There, for a while, he travelled happily through the world with little thought for his country. But he has returned to Israel, to his faith. He still serves unenthusiastically in the army, and has risen to

**ITZIK is a computer whiz. He spends his free time playing an online game: terrorists against counter-terrorists.**

Another time, Doran tells me, "We are dark-skinned. Our kibbutz was chosen as the kibbutz that doesn't always trust us. We are 'blackies' to them." To deal with this, the Amos have hired two Ashkenazi parents to help with kids in the kibbutz. One of those people is Ofir's aunt. His grandfather was a leader of the Jewish community in Frankfurt in the mid 1930s. He was his teenage child away from the Nazi insanity in Germany to Palestine. From his late second marriage, Ofir's father fought hard to make a home for his people here, but she helped found a kibbutz. Ofir knows it took up arms to fight the war of his generation in Lebanon.

upper officer ranks. Before coming to work for the Amos, Ofir had a chicken farm, but it went bankrupt in one of the funniest downturns of the Israeli economy. "Maybe I was too innocent," he says. "Maybe I was taken advantage of. But I struggle on."

In my journey, I am still not sure why people take me in, why they subject themselves to the watching, judging eyes of a stranger. But that is what I sought and what providence provided with the Amos. For this journey, I work. I sleep in Richard's beds, picking beans and ramps. When I return home at night, I am greeted with laughter

The Amos have the demeanor of simple farm folk. They make a warm, easy energy. But they are wise, not innocent. With me and with the world, humanity—generosity of spirit—is the weapon they have chosen as their struggle for happiness.

Itzik is my best friend here. On Saturday mornings, he routinely does miles on his bicycle outside my window, hoping to rouse me from my sleep. One Saturday morning, we walk down to the water hole down below to swim. He tells me that his mother worries when he goes to the pond because the "Arabians" are sometimes there. That day, they are—a whole family of them, swimming in a peaceful Israeli.

One night, as Itzik and I walk back from the mud in Kibla, the Israeli town closest to the mosques, he tells me why we should cross the street. A house up ahead is "dangerous," he says. "The Arabians live there." We walk by anyway. Then an Arab in a park bench, waiting for Itzik's mother to come and fetch us. About the Jews and the Amos, Itzik says, "We live together. But they hate us and we hate them. That is just how it is." I ask him if he doesn't find it heavy to live with hate all around him. "No," he says, "that is why I want to have where you are from."

But "where I am from"—Mossad—a five-booth security targeted a Jewish elementary school, and police and police security forces routinely went on high alert around synagogues and schools. Even where I am from, hate, not humanity, seems on the rise. ☐

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# 'THE BIG GANGSTER IN TOWN'

In his new book, a Vancouver author chronicles his quest to find Steven Wong

**FOR 34 YEARS**, Vancouver journalist Terry Gould has been tracking Steven Wong, leader of the city's ruthless Sun Wah gang and a fully entrenched member of the 14K Triad, one of the largest Chinese mafia groups in the world. In the early 1990s, shortly before the chief gangster was set to stand trial for heroin trafficking, he fled to Asia and, in 1993, filed his own death threat against Wong, accusing Gould of plotting to kill him. Gould pursued Wong across the Pacific, managing to prove that he was not only alive but also engaged in a variety of criminal activities under the protection of corrupt officials in Cambodia, Macau and the Philippines. Still, the gangster continued to slip through the cracks. In December 2003, with no new solid evidence to justify further investigation, the Canadian Justice Department staged its charges against Wong, leaving the Hong Kong-born criminal, who moved to Vancouver when he was 15, free to return to Canada someday and pick up where he left off. Gould, 34, tilted to Maclean's as writer Edna Lianine George about his new book, *Paper Fox: The Hunt for Triad Gangster Steven Wong*, which chronicles his quest.

## What compelled you to delve into the rather hazardous world of organized crime?

A lot of it comes from my own background. I was raised in a neighborhood in Brooklyn that had a lot of crime and different factions of gangs. My grandfather [known as Nathan "The Canine"] Gould came to New York in 1930 from Odessa, the capital of Jewish organized crime in those days. He entered the world of the Jewish mob in New York, which was then operating under the Russian Arnold Rothstein. He's the guy who built the 1919 World Series. I grew up in an area where organized crime was so pervasive, in order to get anything done, you got used to paying people off. Everybody got tapped. I mean, when you gave the policeman something at Christmas, you never knew

## How did you manage to avoid getting sucked into that life yourself?

I didn't see making my way in that world. When I was 21, my wife and I left New York for British Columbia. I was probably one of the only guys who crossed the border that winter while most were running away from the draft. I was running away from corruption in New York.

## When did you first become aware of Steven Wong and gang life in Vancouver?

In 1987, I took my teacher training in a school called Britannia, which at the time was the epicentre of Asian gang activity and recruitment. Steven was the big gangster in town. He walked down Chinatown like he was the conqueror of the north. Steven would send out a couple of his boys to the school yards and catch those little kids—very open and damaged kids in their early years who'd been shaken out of our own assimilation like Cambodia or Vietnam, or part of China. The boys would beat them up and recruit them for a couple of weeks. Then he'd pull up in his Mercedes and watch them, and the recruiting would stop. He'd invite the kids into his car, take them to his gang head quarters and after a week or two of giving them drugs, girls and free pool, they saw themselves as being used. Then these guys would help fight his battles for him—pick up extortion charges, do major drug deliveries. That's how they'd get started.

## Wong became what you call your "life obsession." Why this guy?

It evolved as I came to understand how criminal he was and how organized crime works. Right out in the open, he managed a bodyguard service for heroin dealers. He ran his own heroin airport export operation. He'd killed people—put a bullet in the head of one guy and beat the brains out of another. But he got off on everything. The setup would never make it into evidence, and the judge would throw out the charges or sentence. I studied his life and I realized

his successes and I was able to see how that world works around and through him.

## You proposed a story on him to CBC-TV. How did you convince him to talk to you?

He knew I was CBC guy, but he thought he could use me as propaganda against his rival gang, the Lat So. Also, we got along because I knew the perspective of the world. I started hanging around with Steven for a month, and I really liked the guy. There's a very vulnerable side to him. I say it in the book—if you find out somebody's vulnerable and you control him for them, he's yours. He had a hard upbringing. He worked in a bean sprout washup from the age of 11, and the only people he found to emulate were the gang members who'd come to pick up extortion cheques. They always had cars and good looking girls, and he thought to himself, "That's what I want." It was complicated what he was doing, but not forgivable.

## After he finally got busted by the RCMP, how did he manage to slip away?

The two-part CBC special we did on Steven aired in March of 1990. Three weeks later, the RCMP launched Project Bug to find the source of the heroin being distributed on the Downtown Eastside. They quickly discovered Steven was the mastermind behind it. They made the bust in December 1990. After the preliminary hearing, it became apparent to Steven that he was going down. So first he took out over \$1 million in life insurance. Then he got a judge to get him back his passport under blanket-false promises. He goes over to the Philippines first, then doing you know, he's off to the mountains. All the off-the-books guys are sent away, wanted and disowned. Of course, the whole thing is a complete fraud. He made the co-operation of corrupt officials all over the island.

Your international pursuit of this man has been very dogged and very public. You were evaded under police protection at one point. Aren't you concerned for your safety?



"This is a very exciting pursuit, but I'm a married guy. It's a sport in a way, but I'm not an extreme sportsman. I've always tried to set myself up with fallback positions, to let people know where I am. Usually I'm not frightened wouldn't be true. But I've taken steps that allow me to live the street movie world as a daily bias.

To this day, Wong continues to elude the authorities. Now Gould has staged its charges against him. Why is it so important to you that people don't forget about this case? There's an international reputation now

Gould says Gould has a reputation among bad guys the world over as the place to go

among bad guys that Canada's the place to go. Steven Wong is famous in the underworld. People point to him and say, "I could own a \$1 billion heroin deal and get away with it." We're known internationally as being very lax in terms of our prosecution and sentencing of criminals and terrorists. There's a gang called Da Huang Jai, or Big Circle Boys, that's growing and thriving around the world—and we know they're using Toronto as a home base for their entire trade.

We need longer prison sentences, and our bail conditions are way too lenient. If fugitives aren't punished aggressively, it sends a message to others that fleeing or failing to comply with the law is somehow acceptable. We've got to realize that people don't always play nice.

With your book finished, has your pursuit of Steven Wong finally come to an end? You know the more interview we do, the more going so he you and me and him sitting beside me. He's got his own new life coming back to Canada. He'll be back.



## NOT SO SIMPLE

The Dalai Lama is a publicity pro



**HE MAY** call himself "a simple Buddhist monk," but the Dalai Lama is a very public figure. During the initial part of his 20-day visit to Canada last week, he met with fellow Nobel Peace Prize laureate Desmond Tutu (far left), did TV interviews (they're applying the makeup here) and met with well-wishers in Vancouver (his next stops were Ottawa and Toronto). Vancouver photographer Christopher J. Morris took these exclusive, behind-the-scenes photos of the Tibetan spiritual leader on the first stop of his tour.

For more photos of the Dalai Lama, visit [www.mcgill.ca/gallery](http://www.mcgill.ca/gallery)





## IN PRAISE OF EMPIRES LOST

The trouble with trying to rally Americans to exercise imperial powers

**BRITISH HISTORIAN** Niall Ferguson writes about serious subjects and makes them fun by unearthing. He is a rare main industry, having churned out six immensely clever and argumentative books. In person, he is the thinking man's delight—clever and handsome with natural modesty and millions from TV and book contracts.

Ferguson's latest, *Civilization: The Price of American Empire*, is published this week. One senses it will create an "idea frenzy"—the sort of best-seller every talk show and media program will debate. The thesis is provocative: a spirited defense of the positive virtues

of empire in today's world and of America's role as its single superpower. Gaining just when the U.S. faces condemnation in many parts of the world for her occupation of Iraq, it thrusts the curtain far for counter-intuitive thinking.

Ferguson views America as so as a "liberal empire." An empire, by definition, governs countries beyond its own shores. A liberal empire is one whose loose-building activities include creating the infrastructure of a free market economy and maintaining peace and order, the rule of law and encouraged institutions. Unfortunately, America insists she has no interest or ambitions in being an empire. Putting her secular psyches in the crucible, Ferguson diagnoses "an empire in denial," a great power that refuses to face up to her role and duties. The predicament: "irresponsibility of weakness" to the "irresponsibility of power."

U.S. presidents always make a point of denying their nation's imperial ambitions, especially when avoiding some country. "We're not an imperial power," George W. Bush has said. "We will not impose any form of governance." With such protestations, it is no accident that the U.S. has a shortage of manpower in both its military and nation-building claim. In the days of the British Empire, no colonial officer was full of bright young men from Oxford who would emigrate to India or Africa and put civil and public services in place. Today's Harvard and Yale graduates would much prefer to emigrate to Wall Street or build the ping-pong table rather than run after. After all, what prestige is there in working for an em-

pire unacknowledged even by its emperor? Ferguson believes that U.S. power faces a number of crucial challenges. Among them, a fiscal crisis related to its pension obligations and a growing manpower shortage as well as unmanageable deficits that can only be cured by enormous tax hikes. While he believes empires may emerge, he is less confident that America can overcome its aversion to geopolitical duties. The book is, he reckons, that the U.S. hegemony/empire/neo-imperialism—choose your favorite word—is doomed, so work all other great empires when they laid the will to exercise power. The book is a roaring read, but I find Ferguson's analysis only half true. Whereas the successful nation building by America in West Germany and Japan after the Sec-

ond World War was a function of long years of occupation, it is not fair to say, but that there are other differences between those empires and America's less glorious record in South Vietnam, Nicaragua, Haiti, Afghanistan and Iraq. Germany and Japan were decisively defeated in a way that none of the others have been. In addition, Japan and Germany were naturally ready to embrace World War II occupation democracy.

Most other countries America has gone to meet are not disposed. There is a wonderful novel by Jack London about a native tribe on a tropical island. When outsiders come to do something wrong, perhaps on a British sailor, the local king sends a gunshot to fire on their village. The king is, when the natives see the gunshot on the horizon, they go into the interior and wait while a few have been killed down. The ship leaves, the natives return to the shore, cook the pigs killed by the ship's gun and have a feast. The hero is rebuffed in a day and the natives consider the score settled—all the rest edible victor arrives. The story sums up what a sophisticated power lacks when fighting a smaller unsophisticated force. In a way, it is easier to defeat Germany than the Iraqi insurgents, especially when you have certain inhibitions and can't act with the ruthlessness of a Saddam.

I suppose an openly imperial power with confidence in the virtue of its cause would find it easier to speak its values. Colonial empires would be justified by the sort of enthusiastic administrators the British and French empires had—young men and women willing to create municipal services for down-trodden peoples. But having said that, I can only reply to Ferguson, "What are those empires now?" Those boy scout qualities of civility did nothing for the preservation of civil empires or for keeping its many countries the institutions the world power put in place.

Ultimately, people seem to prefer self-government to good government. As for the American, they came into being struggling against rule and they're still struggling against rule. They're still firm in the cause of empire goes against their grain—in it is trying to make a home before conquest. Of course, the United States has the ability to change her army and transform her attitudes towards the task of "civilizing" medieval countries, but I'm not exactly sure that would be desirable. America could put the world by force but her soul and that has never been much of a bargain.

Barbara Amiel is a columnist and author of monthly best-selling columns.

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# A HARD ROAD TO ATHENS

A top gymnast pays the price to achieve her dream, BRIAN BERGMAN writes

**KYLIE STONE** doesn't look like a gymnast. But in gymnastics, that's what the five-foot-three, 125-lb. Calgary native is shaping up to be. At last year's world championships in Anaheim, Calif., Kylie placed 14th all-around, the highest-over-ranking by a female Canadian gymnast. Now, Kylie, who turns 17 on May 16, is hoping to represent Canada this August at the Summer Games in Athens (the team will be named after June 1). Performing at that level requires a single-minded dedication, especially in a sport in which athletes reach their peak during their teens and one shot at Olympic glory is often all they get. For years, Kylie has juggled school while maintaining a grueling training regimen, five hours a day, six days a week—sacrificing many of the normal rhythms of adolescence.

At the same time, Kylie has been luckier than most. For the past two years, she's attended the Calgary-based National Sport School, run jointly by the Calgary Olympic Development Association and the Calgary Board of Education, the year-round school gives 100 elite athletes from more than a dozen sports an opportunity to finish high school while training their training and competition commitments. Class sizes are small, homework deadlines are negotiable and teachers do on-line services so that Kylie can keep up when she's out on the road by e-mailing teachers and using Web-based learning materials.

While that flexibility helps, the challenges facing high-performance athletes remain daunting. Consider this day in the life of someone on the cusp of Olympic stardom.

**9 A.M.** I join Kylie and her father, Jeff Stone, for breakfast at their home in northwest Calgary. Kylie's still asleep from her eyes. Jeff cooks scrambled eggs, which she washes down with strawberry juice. Her dad's healthy diet stuff of oranges and oats. "You have to eat the junk food," says Jeff. "The gym very little post—gymnast eat a week. And the odd chocolate bar is a treat,



Kylie Stone is fit times with friends around her pre-bed training and school schedule.

though never a full-on one." Kylie is a low-level one. "Let's keep on her scrambled eggs."

Jeff is a single dad (Kylie's his only child) whose work as a roofer gives him the first 15 minutes to do his laundry to and from school and the gym. As for her eggs, he explains how he enrolled her at age 5 in a recreational gymnastics program after watching her tumbling around the floor at home. A natural, Kylie was soon placed in a pre-competitive program and began competing at age 9 (the earliest age possible in Alberta). After winning the junior nationals in St. John's in 2001, Kylie set her sights on

the Olympics. Which means, of course, stepping up her training another notch. "Dad, she's not like that, she's got so much for her sport!" "Not really," she says. "I don't see friends that often. But we have Sundays off and I try to get together with them then."

**10:30 A.M.** Jeff drops Kylie off at Forest Mountain High School, where the National Sport School occupies one wing. Her first class is an career and life management, something the Grade 11 student is thinking a lot about these days. American still remains her lining up to offer her athletic scholarships, she is leaning toward UCLA or University of Utah. She's not sure yet what she wants to study—maybe psychology. Once at university, she will have less opportunity to compete internationally, another reason Athens is such a singular opportunity for her. "It's hard to go to school and then get back into Olympic mode," says Kylie. Athens, the next, training at the university level consists of "only" 22 hours a week.



**1:10 P.M.** Between classes, Kylie has a brief session with sports psychologist Clara Fowler. These talks are becoming more frequent as the Olympics approach. They discuss ways Kylie can maintain her confidence between performances—in the overall event, she competes in four events: vault, uneven bars, balance beam and floor. This is a particularly crucial thing as she's going well. Fowler tells her to remember great performances of the past, she supports her from coaches, friends and family—anything

in her five-hour training session, Stone practices her four different events

to stay positive. Kylie admits she gets down on herself when she doesn't perform as well as she'd like. "But I'm forgiving as well," she says. "If I'm listening to focus on the next event rather than reliving the last one."

Fowler acknowledges there's really no way to prepare for the pressure. To help manage the stress, she urges athletes to imagine all possible outcomes. "We often start with the worst, that could happen," says Fowler. "Anyways? How would you feel about that? Or what about if everything

goes perfectly?" In Kylie's case, that could be a good model, it's not out of the question. It's important to have that golden carrot out there, but it can't be the sole focus."

**12 P.M.** Over the next two hours, Kylie attends physics and French classes. National Sport School principal Rick Press says that, even among her peers, Kylie faces unusual pressures. The school attracts nearly 500 elite athletes (short track speed skater Norma Kraus and freestyle skier Doreen Thorne, both Olympic bronze medalists, are among its alumni), and most don't compete internationally until their 20s. "It's different for Kylie," says Press. "Her time is now."

**2 P.M.** Jeff takes Kylie to her home for some downtime. She watches *Trading Spies* on TV.

**3:30 P.M.** Kylie arrives at the Stampede City Gymnasium Club. Since she was 5, she's been coached by Roseanne Horn, husband and wife Flora and Stephania Dine. "From the beginning," says Horn, "she was physically strong, willing to try anything and all ways, always, working hard. That's the key. A hard worker will survive—and succeed."

Over the next five hours, Kylie runs through her daily drill. Warm-ups and conditioning followed by pommel and full routines in all four gymnastic events. She's surrounded by up to two dozen girls, some as young as 6, all going through their own paces but keeping a watchful eye on the star at their midst. "Kylie's so good with the young ones," says Stephania. "I ask them, 'How do you want to go?' And they reply, 'As fast as Kylie!'"

Kylie's workout is strenuous and unpredictable. She settles into one of her routines, a dismount, whether it's a flurry of tumbles and flips on the bar or a series of somersaults on the bars. Just toward the end, as she repeats again and again a kind of high-wire ballet on the beam, Kylie slips with herself. Stephania explains that one of Kylie's weaknesses, swapped in a bar, is a vault, so it's not looking as she'd like. "This is how she is," says Stephania. "The next her as a friend, there will be tears in her eyes. That she always keeps trying."

**9 P.M.** Kylie arrives home for dinner—a large meal of green salad with shaved cheese on top, and a couple of sandwiches. She's ahead of her homework and a bit of TV or computer chatting with friends. At 11 p.m., it's lights out, in the hopes of nine solid hours of sleep. Tomorrow it'll begin again. **B**

**FEW** classmates compete at the top level before their 20s. "It's different for Kylie," says Press. "Her time is now."



## THE BLUE HEART OF LEAFS NATION

Toronto fans don't need a Cup to justify a parade

THE LEAFS have just loaded the Senators out of the NHL playoffs and, on Bay Street, the cold heart of Toronto's financial district, the crowd just seems to be heating up. Typical is the guy in a red Mustang convertible with Maple Leafs crests posted on the doors. It's below zero with the wind chill, but he's got the top down and is trying to simultaneously hawk his team, wave a large Leaf flag, answer his cellphone and steer the car. That's too much for Mustang boy; his phone slips from his grip, the flag blows into his face and, unable to see, he makes an emergency stop just short of the nearest bumper. The screech of tires is barely audible in the cacophony of car horns, noisier and emboldened, he waves his flag, hoots and drives on, shouting, "Go Leafs Go!"

It's a cry, so contrary to the hushed-down image of Toronto. The best seats at Leaf games are held by suits who rarely stop leafing for fear of spilling their lattes. Yet after every big Leaf victory, a stream of blue and white spills out onto the downtown streets

and courses tensely up Yonge Street. Last week the stream became a flood, as we after Game 7 of the momentous Battle of Ottawa and the latest series won 4-1, which meant a lot. But that much? Thousands of Toronto fans honked and hollered into the wet heavens. Like it was VJ Day or something. There is no perspective here in Leafs Nation. Let's be clear: the Senators, the best

**PEOPLE** here need something to celebrate, a woman suggests. Her date adds: "It has been a long time since 1967."

even in every respect except goaltending, but the series more than the Leafs was. And this was just the first round. The Montreal Canadiens and Calgary Flames also recorded stirring, seventh-game victories, but their fans used the season parking for lots, an understanding that three more rounds will be

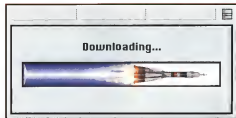
played before the Stanley Cup gets handed out. In Leafs Nation, though, there is no such restraint, and even if they paid attention to what happens in Calgary and Montreal—which they don't—it wouldn't matter.

The blue frenzy doesn't just afflict home games. The highway to Ottawa before Game 4 is jammed with Leaf flag-festooned cars. Toronto's own radio describes the Condo Centre just as they are when the Leafs play elsewhere in Canada. It's just louder in downtown Toronto after a series win. At 11 p.m. on the parade route, four guys in a rented Hyundai, three hanging half out the windows, are stopped at a traffic light. Are they partying defensively, so get their fun in now in case the Leafs get crushed by Philadelphia in Round 2? "Hell no," one guy shouts. "This is our divorce."

There are more lucid participants. At a Yonge Street bar are two guys who've stopped for a post-screening is-they-work. "It's just for fun," one says. "We're sports fans. Usually all you see driving by here are the Bay Street boys, and they only honk their horns when North hits \$100. Now it's our turn." Back on the sidewalk, looking slightly bemused, is a 40ish couple who've been at the musical *Mousetrap*. "I think people in Toronto just need to celebrate something," the woman says. The man nods. "It has been a long time since 1967," he adds, referring to the last Leaf Cup victory. Just when it's beginning to make sense here, Leaf Mustang boy reeking south on Yonge. It's around midnight and he's not alone anymore—now there are three scantly clad guys aboard, and one proceeds to exhale and whistles by lifting her top.

The Leafs Nation thing has no cynics. It's a trademark now—the team is producing a glossy, quarterly magazine under that name. But centre Joe Newswelder is no cynic. He's 37, an Ivy League, and before joining this season with Toronto he played in New Jersey, whose support is indifferent even though the Devils have won three Cups in the last nine years. "As a player, it's exciting to see fans get so fired up," he says after a workout the next morning. "Every player should experience something like this in his career." That said, he's happy to try to snuff lengths. "When I pulled out of here last night," Newswelder says, "I saw the traffic, did a U-turn and got right out of there." R

James Deacon writes for Leafs Nation at rogers.com



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Entry | BY PATRICIA PEARSON

## WHEN KIDS ARE CRUEL

Children can be cutting,  
but few are truly nasty

**READING** seven-year-old daughter a storybook the other day, I had begun to address the question of bullying. No big, boring, gross story like *Wilder the Farting Dog*. Just, rather, one of those usually interactive tales that abound in children's literature, such as *Meanie Was Not a Monster* or *Every One Has Secrets*. Given the current obsession on childhood obesity, I decided it was only a matter of time before we'd see *Chubby Kidney Beans*. Likewise, perhaps you've noticed that "bullying" has become a pervasive catchword of late. There's been no shortage of headlines, school pamphlets, public seminars, government studies, all centered on what to do about bullying at school.

of bullying have increased since I attended elementary school in the 1970s. But certainly the concept has gained more agency, and interviews to combat bullying are filled

**'BULLIES** are popular. They are not lonely, it is their victims who are more likely to have been demonized.'

father argues him to become the same via. He shares his lunch, he invites the stranger to play ball. Ultimately, they forge a happy friendship. The book's illustrations gradually shift, so that the two little boys look and

Under the circumstances, it is hard for children to pick out the "bullies" among all the garden variety offenders who are the



maximum. Instead of being scared of them, try to befriend them and see what happens."

My daughter drew out her lip, looking decidedly unsure, and possibly wondering if I had a screw loose. Clara knows that this is an adultish fat lady who begs you, "bully!" And like other children, she is eager to put her knowledge of adult life to use. But, in the highly complicated universe of her elementary school, it is difficult to pursue what adults actually mean by bully. From Clara's point of view, all children pick on each other, in one way or another. That is her experience. I ought to know this, because whenever I listen to conversations between little girls in my class, I can't decide whether to laugh or cry. There's no obviously hurting.

**'BULLIES** are popular. They are lonely. It is their victims who are more likely to have been demonized.'

say, "Oh, I think you both look lovely," young children meet one another with brutal frankness: "You're pretty, by far—Zoe's hair looks stoned!" a girl exclaims, com-

Under the circumstances, it is hard for children to pick out the "bullies" among all the garden variety offenders who are their

Others—whose feelings they're right back on—a daily basis. On one occasion, Clara happily identified as "a bully" a boy who actually suffers from ADHD. He is hyperactive and impulsive, and will often throw fits. In effect, he bullies her. It is that what adults mean by bullying: I asked the principal of Clara's school. She said she would dearly like to see more information out there for parents on "what bullying is not," in her view, bullying involves a powerful child picking on a weaker or less secure victim. She distinguishes that from peer aggression, which is also perceived to have increased in Canadian schools, although—again—there are little concrete data.

I want to recall throwing a rock at someone when I was in the elementary school. I also remember that bullying was usually involved in the so-called coal kids picking on the nerd, or the fat kid, and that dynamic apparently persists. A study published last December in the journal *Psychology* reported that bullies were not like the stereotypical "Clash" book "Despite increased disorder problems," wrote author Jaana Järvenen of UCLA's psychology department, "bullies are psychologically strong, and enjoyed high social status during primary school years."

In other words, bullies are popular. They are not socially isolated or lonely. It is their victims—some of whom, the UCLA study points out, are aggressive or provocative themselves—who are more likely to have been dominated or rendered "monstrous," like the newbies. That complicates our picture of the playground jungle.



## TEARS, BEER AND ISABELLA

Guy Maddin's new concoction is kitschy, delirious and brazenly showbiz



**THERE'S BEEN** a lot of debate about what kind of movies Canadians should be making, especially now that Telefilm Canada has hired the Hollywood megagency Creative Artists Agency to recruit expensive Canadians into production back home. A number of local producers are nervous that, in so quiet a market, our movies must be profitable, Telefilm may sacrifice artistic filmmaking for a dumbed-down cinema. If that's the case, Guy Maddin's work would become an endangered species. This Winnipeg director, whose films are constructed like fine art objects of strange cinema, has a singular great. And with

the glorious folly of his own feature, *The Saddest Music in the World*, he's playing the boldest kind of his career, imagining trying to pitch this in Hollywood.

"Okay, we've got Isabella Rossellini, but minus the legs. She's playing a double surprise beer business in Winnipeg during the Great Depression. She hosts a big contest to find the saddest music in the world, an Olympics of grief. It's like a reality TV show, but on the radio, and everything looks really fake, and nothing is real. Especially the snow. Mark McKinney, one of those Radio

the Holdovers, plays this cheerful dentist who borrows his father's girlfriend. He's a riot. And the script is drenched with most goofy Canadian references that a Conan O'Brien broadcaster from Toronto. But get this, it's based on a screenplay by Kazuo Ishiguro. He won the Booker for *The Remains of the Day*. It's the Oscar for novels. Book, yeah, it got made into this decent movie

Of *Isabella*, the director says, "There's one big weird notion: most art is constructed."

with Anthony Hopkins. But no, *Saddest Music* is anything like that. It's not even that it's really music."

And wildly original. Maddin bridges the worlds of cinephilia and Canuck knock with equally high wit and witiness. The film, some cinematic melodrama, comes across as a surreal parody of what the Great Canadian Movie might look like. *Cheaper* (McKinney), a faded Broadway soprano, comes home to Winnipeg with her overcoat, an armoire named Narcissa (Mara De Maizena). He looks up his old flame, prance beer queen Lady Panshenitz (Rossellini). We learn how the last both legs in a Niagara car crash involving *Cheaper*, *Isabella*, and a husband would be by his cuckolded father on a drunk cruise. Now she's promoting her Monkey Brewery by offering a \$25,000 purse to the musician with the saddest tune. As commentators look to Winnipeg lives around the globe, *Cheaper* goes to the press, along with her mother-in-law (David Fox), who plays the *Real Hope* Lerner on an overgrown piano, and his meek Serbian teacher (Glen McMillan), a meek critic who keeps his son's heart in a jar, preserved in ice.

As Mexico faces off against Spain, and Canada against Africa, the contest unfolds as a carnival of antique ethnic stereotypes. A pair of unassuming middle-class Canadians, as the stiffed cadence of a beguine CD, provide the play by play. The script is drenched with culture, composed out—lines like, "I'm not an American, I'm a symphonist." But as the little dance narrative whirled through a circus of commenters, Maddin's basic brilliance shows more awareness than much.

Shooting in black and white, with occasional bursts of colour, Maddin draws on a palette of dreamlike styles, from the grey of *Quake* to the reds of the flickering lights of silent film. And the images are cut with a kaleidoscopic sense of montage. And all the arch filmic, it's a challenge for an actor to be real. Rossellini as a fairy tale witch in a platinum wig. McMillan and Fox both break through the norms of arch

with full-bodied performance. If the comedy lacks emotional balance, perhaps that's because in Maddin's hyper-realist art, the only genuine passion is for art itself.

"Guy wouldn't have existed if there weren't 100 years of film," Rossellini adds. "Not just visually, but even his characters are more inspired by the history of film than reality. In Winnipeg we watched a lot of *Lan Chaney* films. I always said, Lady Panshenitz would be the daughter of Lan Chaney and Cressida de Vill. And Mark McKinney, wearing Clark Gable." As the daughter of Ingrid Bergman and director Roberto Rossellini, the actress has a keen sense of cinematic heritage. "I've worked a lot in film restoration," she explains. "So when I saw Guy Maddin's work, I was very touched that preservation is really his music, and that is an producer new art."



The director wanted to capture a tiny, intimate Winnipeg scene, complete with "brown dirt."

*Saddest Music* in Maddin's most ambitious film, with (for him) a relatively plush budget of \$3.5 million. With Rossellini's star power and a solidifying, almost slapstick narrative, it may allow him to find a broader audience. "I studied down the German expressionists, and the cinema has been inspired up," he says. "But the duals are all set at an appropriate level for the story."

Written during the late 1980s, and set in London, Ishiguro's original screenplay was radically revised. "The script got a heavy revision of Canadian DNA," says Maddin, who co-wrote *Saddest Music* with George Toles, who helped him create *Archangel*, *Careful* and *Twilight of the Ice Nymphs*. Shooting in a warehouse, the director wanted to capture a Dirty Thirties Winnipeg, writer, from "dreamy images of overexposed snow" to "brown dirt—there's nothing more de-

pressing than brown dirt." But he got more winter than he bargained for. The water was so frozen that you couldn't be outdoors, with temperatures plunging to -45°. "We filmed a portion of it to make a skating rink, and the ice didn't melt all day."

Winters, parks, playoffs and games sliding into a giant vat of beer, maybe *Saddest Music* isn't as far removed from *Men With Brooms* as it might seem. It has a sense of something which *Cheaper* applied to his pitch to Lady Panshenitz. "There's an angle for you—America versus Canada. A beach not even here to date to our music, we'll have you on top. I won the dough, this Yank's got to find his own beer in a hurry." With Canadian winters, Maddin's more concerned about how often the dissemination upon of Canadian cinema. "Really good movies still need really good luck. You just can't control this stuff." ■



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**MACLEAN'S**



## KIND HEARTS and CRACKHEADS

A writer gets down and dirty in a Toronto shantytown

**BY HIS OWN** admission, Shaughnessy Bishop Stoll, 25, has a mile-wide streak of homelessness. It's frequently on display in *Down to This* (Random House), his memoir of 10 months spent in Tent City, the homeless shantytown that flourished for four years in the shadow of Toronto's bank towers. It doesn't take long for a reader to realize that Bishop-Stoll was not a straightforward journalistic reporter. Even before he came to

The author still is out by dawn while still and caught up in used beer drops

rentow. So he took the game of survival "from my mother, who's still looking herself down" spending a few days in Tent City and turning out a magazine article—and decided to move there long enough to write a book and, perhaps, repair his life.

In short, a mix of motives not that very different from his fellow squatters. Like gutter writers who know genuine territory when they see it, they came to Tent City—where at most no one actually lived in a tent—for the drastically unjust mental company, for a place to call their own, for the usable junk of the imagery scattered over its 27 acres, for its close

ness to urban amenities (beer stores and soup kitchens), and the blessed freedom from cops that's provided by squatting on private land.

After an anxious start, Bishop-Stoll soon fit right in with his new neighbors: smoke heads, alcoholics, prostitutes, fugitives, artists, and other lost souls. He built a cabin, drank everything from whiskey to cough syrup, smoked teeth, boozed marijuana, and nuzzled everything. The place was a deliberate anarchy, Bishop-Stoll says, but an accidental community. In some ways Tent City was a bizarre suburb, where babies were born and gardens tilled, from which the inhabitants commuted daily to

Toronto to work, beg, or steal. When the owner of the land moved to close it down in September 2002, Bishop-Stoll was alone, as the other 138 odd inhabitants. "I kept telling myself that this was a good thing, that I could get on with my life. But there's something deeply damaging to your psyche to be forcibly removed from a place you built yourself. I was not mistaken." And benefit of a community he'd grown to care about.

But Bishop-Stoll has come out the other side now, partly through the redemptive power of writing. His never went more than 48 hours without at least getting a note. "I realized quickly that if I didn't write almost daily, I'd go insane." But down in *This* is far more than a therapeutic exercise. Plainly written and bitterly honest, it's also a moving depiction of the centrifugal forces embedded in our consumer society. "When people feel like a grinding wheel," Bishop-Stoll says of Tent City's damaged souls, "they often develop hyper-awareness of others' pain." And he did find unexpected friends and surprising "acts of dramatic kindness," often when he needed them the most, like the insurance man that rescued him from a savage—and pointless—beating on Christmas Eve.

—BRIAN KETNANE

### EXCERPTS FROM DOWN TO THIS:

I tried to cover up, but there was only so much I could do. I finally managed to get to my feet, but Karl had won by then and they

took me down again. I could see the wood descending to the twilight, the smoke curling around it as it cut through the air. My nose had bled and there was blood in my eyes, and I could hear Julie's voice yelling, "Look at him! Look what you've done to his face!" And then she was on the ground beside me. I tried to grab for her, but my arms went into the barrier and I could hear blood sizzling on my sleeve. I pulled over on the burning sleeve, and suddenly everything was crimson—Julie's red-piggy blood in a glow of blood and fat. My arms had gone north from deflecting the blow, and felt like someone else's arms—someone else who was taking the beating.

A woman's voice called out. It was Eddie's girlfriend, Karen. "Leave him alone!" she yelled. She's small and slight and pregnant, too, and apparently very brave. "That's my friend!" she shouted. And for a moment everything stopped, as if a hand had occurred to them I might have a friend. It was a surprise to me as well. Then, in the momentary stillness, Karl's true self rose up. Like the opposite of the

Gandhi's heart, growing three sizes, Karl's sick and began to swell. He turned, took a swing, and he knew across the side with the two-by-four. Even before she yelled out, I was up and at him. No one moved to help me, and now Karl was under my fist as it worked up and down, the sleeve still smoking on my arm. By the time the other finally came for me again, Eddie was there too.

**"BY THE time I got a candle lit there was blood on the floor, the bed. I opened my notebook and blood dripped on the page."**

and he reached me first

"Hi, Eddie"

"Hey, young Shuan," he said, then pulled me to my feet and dragged me down to my shack. I was dazed and he propped me against the door. "Don't go back there tonight," he said. "You got that, Shuan?"

"But I—"

"You can deal with them in the morning." "The morning," I said. Blood gurgling in my mouth. Eddie pulled the door open and helped me inside.

"Karl's name, though," he said. "You understand?"

"All right, Eddie. Merry Christmas." "Thanks. And it's my birthday, too."

"Happy birthday."

My hands were swollen and shaking, and by the time I got a candle lit there was blood on the floor and the bed. I pulled open my notebook and blood dripped on the page. My face felt like pulp when I touched it. I tried to breathe and my whole body tightened. It didn't feel like my body, or my eyes. It'd been turned inside a roomer I saw a few days and the blood floor where it landed. I lay down on my back and looked up at the wooden planks of my roof. My body didn't burn yet, but I knew it would. And like child dress all over the world, I couldn't fall asleep just thinking of the morning to come.

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## A 25-YEAR-LONG RECESS

I quit in a huff but now I'm back practising—and loving—the piano

"SCREW IT." Back when I was 16, that made-epithet was my emotional response to any activity that seemed too difficult, too time-consuming, too risky and not likely to result in getting any chicks. This particular instance, I was referring to the piano and the endless hours of accompanying classical theory, history and technique that had been a part of my life for 12 years. As a four-year-old in 1963, I had learned chords in an early Canadian experiment in the then-revolutionary Suzuki method of music teaching. Instead of learning from a teacher in the traditional one-on-one manner, precocious preschoolers

were put in groups to pick up the rudiments. In parent supervised classes in a church basement, we gathered round the teacher, basking ourselves and hanging from, playing organs and clapping hands. We stuck sticks in primrose that were pinned in English as a basis and had fun and illustrations years ahead of Hello Kitty logo-wear, but I'm not making the same choice.

Two years later, I learned the more formal instruction in the piano with Betty Joan, my first—and, at times only—late-career teacher. Cultural Japanese music books were replaced with the stiff tunes from the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. Bashing away on xylophones was supplanted by practicing scales, triads and arpeggios.

Betty Joan, 20 years my senior, was petite blond who had had the painful decision between a career in music or professional ballet made for her by a sister who as an accident years earlier had been defined by an eight-hour-a-day regimen of study and practice to achieve her teaching certificate. Betty Joan took me through the early grades with a goodnatured and patience that I understood only now, decades later. She lived with her parents in a house only 10 minutes walk away from mine; it was central to my life and, as I returned home from the lessons, Franz Joseph Haydn and Clara Schumann played for their place in my head that sang to me.

My first love life, given, a spirited Bach concerto, was performed and passed out in front of a house of listening slaves. As each

with my year asked swiftly by, it was marked by its equivalent outside in Royal Conservatory grade level. Each January, I would be greeted by the same event—a princely half-hour covered up in the doorway of the local Matsuzaki. Trickle with a myriad poems, an adaptation who asked of old-guy well, and my suddenly every silence, all seem highly competent to keep me from graduating to the next grade. (Now I am, during an eclectic sponsored seminar on stress in the new space, the confessions of childhood

redefining my neural pathways and telling parents. I wasn't playing the piano so much as participating in it.) But by the time I was 16, piano and classical music theory class was more ensuring about half my first time, and I was finally sick of it. When I finally told Betty Joan when I was turning 16, we couldn't look each other in the eye. Oh, I continued playing for years, branching into guitar and eventually learning a Celtic trio that performs to this day (and puts most in the freezer, too, a not-to-obvious side effect of formal musical training). But Betty Joan did gait. A good hole. The lingering realization that I had left something musical and breath takingly beautiful behind.

Fast forward a quarter-century. It seems shamefully random in retrospect—a most truly successful IT career, a 16-hour day week in 2001 that resulted in a beautiful concert grand as my living room. This subtle voice was calling me. A chance encounter with Betty Joan—the post-Christmas brought it all together. My former confessions had ended into a delightfully eccentric middle age and was still teaching—and instant karma got me. In the dark of a snowy January evening, while clearing the driveway, I decided to pick up where I had left off in teenage angst, so many years before.

So now, every Thursday, I out there about 4 p.m. and make the pilgrimage to Betty Joan's house and her battered piano. Twenty-five years, piano-wise, all come back within weeks. Scales, triads, arpeggios—Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Cadence, chord and a resound. In the Italian no-nonsense, dirigen' a la mode—from the sign to the solo, play it all over again. I know work, and heaven knows my wife's presence need by any rightly precise someone that please, oh please, don't wipe the grin off my face.

Vince Anderson lives in Vancouver. To comment, write to vince@vancouver.ca.

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# GREEN FAST FOOD HARDLY 'LITE'

**FAT IS FAT**, everyone has concluded, so who is Ronald McDonald's dieter? Confronting diet-conscious consumers resistent to fat carbs and calories, and clean-eat-on layers looking for someone to blame for the scourge of obesity, fast-food giants have spent the past year trying to prove their dedication to healthy eating. Salads, wraps and soups now prominently share menu space with Whoppers and French fries. McDonald's U.S.A. is going as far as to launch a Go Active Adult's Hugs! Meal that contains a salad, bottled water and a pedometer for encourage walking. McDonald's salads—something that would have been swatted 10 years ago—now appear on signs and Web sites of many fast-food chains, making it easy to compare the health properties of a McDonald's McSalad Burger (1/2 of fat) to Wendy's Chicken Tempestas (1 1/2 of fat) to an Arby's-friendly wrap (1 1/2 of fat) at Subway. Fast-food restaurants are even going so far as to advertise the importance of a balanced diet.

Skeptics? Join the club. Many nutritionists have questioned the true dietary benefits of these new offerings, pointing out that many of the salads are high in fat, sodium, calories and cholesterol. And while the fresh entries are a big hit with consumers, sales rates at fast-food outlets have gone up 13% in the past year—to many of the same restaurants long associated with super-sized and greasy new-judding good nutrition is hard to swallow. We wondered if the latest menu items would prove really tough to digest. So we interviewed the most popular salads, offered by McDonald's, Subway and Wendy's. **THE VERDICT:** Considering our low expectations, a couple of the entries turned out to be pleasant surprises in the fast-food department. But a fast-food diet still wouldn't be our first diet option for a salad. **OUR CHOICE:** Subway's grilled chicken and spinach salad. But even without this salad is hardly a dieter's special. It packs a hefty 48 g of fat—more than a McDonald's Big Mac!

## WHAT'S IN STORE

**Pro Tem:** Super health, 500s, for sales, having a close of sales just isn't the same without the vending machine peddling nutty snacks. **Crash:** Drop \$100-\$200 on Wendy's Skyline and you can play the video symphony at home. In stores this July, snacks and pop cans not included.

FAST IMPRESSION	PORTION PROFILES	TASTE	NOODLESIDE
 <b>WENDY'S Spinach Chicken Salad</b> (with buffalo dressing) is a nutritious and low-fat entrée. <b>\$5.99</b>	Looks surprisingly appealing considering it's a chicken salad. Appearance rivals that of salads you'd find at higher end deli or pub.	Free hand-cut chicken 28 g of fat is a 44% fat source (including dressing and chicken). High source of vitamins A and C. Contains 16g of fat.	Not bad. Basic chicken salad. However, as the top layer, it's a generous serving of sliced chicken breast and fresh tomatoes are quite good.
 <b>McDonald's Chicken Caesar Salad</b> (with Caesar dressing) is a light and healthy salad. <b>\$5.99</b>	Chicken looks plastic and there is little to about a high school student working part-time. Mmm. When you taste a Big Mac, you're before taking a bite.	Part of the chain's "Healthy Choices" menu. A 340 g serving including dressing and dressing has 384 calories and 15 g of fat. If you're a Big Mac and small fries have 486 calories and 41 g of fat.	Lighter Caesar is ultra-light on flavor. The salad is largely lettuce, but that's just as well. The chicken strips are beef.
 <b>SUBWAY Grilled Chicken and Arby's Spinach Salad</b> (with Arby's dressing) <b>\$5.99</b>	An ingenious Subway fashion, the salad is made in front of you. You can get a good amount of vegetables, resulting in a delicious salad. Get away the high-fat dressing of the French.	Part of the chain's new Active Friendly menu, which aims to provide a variety of all things low-fat and high protein. In a 340 g serving 630 calories and 41 g of fat (all on oil).	The grilled chicken is very good and so is the hard-boiled egg. Together with the other two salads, it's a healthy meal. The spinach of having the chicken in meat is a nice touch.

**TIP:** Always ask for dressing on the side so the grease isn't mixed into the food. And avoid dressings with preservatives and dyes. Buy in bulk, in deli and oil, and dress.

Super-slim salad bars: the serving is more than good as in this "light" dressing, and the low-cal low-fat.

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## CLOSINGNOTES



### People | Spotlight on the second most sought-after *Idol*

Audrey de Montigny realizes she needs to work on her English if she hopes on breaking outside French Canada. So twice weekly for the last few months, the 18-year-old from Ste-Julienne, Que., has met with a tutor. She still giggles through her English-language interviews, but she's come a long way since first taking the *Canadian Idol* stage last summer. "The classes have been going very well," says de Montigny, "but my biggest problem is that I'm very shy."

That's certainly not the case when you

de Montigny, whose debut CD is set for a week, says she's shy, others say away

hand her a mike. De Montigny's disc first broke—after *Idol* winner Ryan Malcolm—to release a CD. (Her self-titled debut, which features three English tracks, hits stores on April 27.) In fact, the ink was barely dry on Malcolm's contract when *Idol* Canada scrapped up de Montigny—who'd turned heads with her polished vocals and good looks. Does the constant focus on her appearance bother her? "I don't mind," she says. "I want careers in music and modelling. I like being in front of the camera." JOHN HORTON

## LISTING

You wouldn't know it from the *Lord of the Rings* movies, but J. R.R. Tolkien's books are full of song lyrics and scenes where characters, alive and such, are singing. It made *Dean Barry* a job that much easier. When the 30-year-old Toronto-based composer was approached by the Canadian Children's Opera Chorus, he stocked up on kufir fiction, including *Phaedrus*, *Victorian* stories and the first three *Harry Potter* books—and was inspired. "The idea of the *Midnight* came up," he says. "But I remember being too, with a lot of people involved. I thought maybe this is a little too much. There's a reality of that in the *CDOP* there are 80 kids on stage, not usually a lot of them and up playing their voices. Fourth present, *Immortal* presents. So the *Midnight* was actually perfect." The production runs in Toronto May 15-16 at the Fourfourfour Centre, and features Canadian singer Julia Furlong as *Enid*. *Andrew* says he has seen the site for a large tour of Atlantic Canada.



## CLOSING NOTES

**TV** | Let's out-Trump *The Apprentice*

On the heels of NBC's *The Apprentice*, ABC and Fox are launching their own reality TV shows starring business moguls (ABC's *The Billionaire*, with Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban and Fox's *Arsoner's Big Adventure*, with Vegas Group founder Sir Richard Branson). Marchand wondered, "If there were a Canadian offering, who would be the star? Our top three suggestions

SHOW	CONCEPT	FACE
 <p><b>Guest Who Won't Be Slaying For Dinner?</b> Conrad Black, Chairman, Hollinger Inc.</p>	<p>Three ambitious blackboards are selected (by David) to deliver a message for the evening of roast pheasant and quacking repartee. Armed with their best wit/cheese, contestants jockey for their host's esteem. Each week, the most tedious guest is unceremoniously ejected from the dining room.</p>	<p>To the last remnant of dignity, guest gives a toast on Hollinger's board of directors, or a set of steak knives.</p>
 <p><b>Constructive Criticism</b> Hardber, Resumes, CEO, Indigo Books &amp; Music</p>	<p>In this home improvement of show with a twist, first-time newbies take pick up hammer and palm-saw and lend a hand with the ongoing construction of Resumé's (Owner: Hardber) estate. Materials—used only weekly—are locked up in the "improvement book cellar" until the owner's ready.</p>	<p>The handkerchief vendor was an honorary seat on the "Headline's Plaque" table (to select Indigo locations).</p>
 <p><b>Malice's Paradox: Regained?</b> Rickie H. Malice, CEO, Air Canada</p>	<p>It's a most against the clock! Each week, teams of Air Canada's employees compete to solve riddles for the nation's "flamboyant airline." While stunts, "Dark the Pilot" games, or stunts in his workshop in the grand finale, Malice presents the ultimate reward to his highest-grossing team.</p>	<p>Covered "financially saccharine," which guarantees employees' jobs through the next round of layoffs.</p>

### Q & A | Who would Walter sign now?

In the end, TBS, the three-head of CBS records, Walter Yetulcoff, was successfully guiding the careers of Michael Jackson, Bruce Springsteen, Marvin Gaye and more—all the while, snarling content with the same speed and intensity that, as Miller was flying off the shelves, have, but no longer a lagging, and bers, clean, Yetulcoff, 30, detail it all in *Awakening at the Altar: The Odyssey of a Mainstream Music Man* (see page 40 of *Entertainment Weekly*).



Gaye was one of Verbitsky's big-name artists

I. **Marah Jones** obviously. When an artist put out music that people like, people will buy it. And I'm not even a particular fan, it's still a little too cool for me.

3. **David Bowie.** He looks hot to me and [his superma(n) wife] Iman seems to be happy. And he sounds great.

**TV | Still here, still**  
*Queer, fourth year*

After three years of fullbacks and auditions for the musical *West*, Toronto actor **Dean Armstrong** landed a lead part as the blood war hit in 2003. But just as he set down to negotiate the contract, he was offered a recurring part on the TV series *Queer as Folk*. So, Armstrong is back—high-profile gigs into his schedule, as well as running an acting school. "I had my own limo driver and I was flying back and forth from Toronto to New York—waiting 15-hour days on *Queer* as *Folk*," then doing *Eye* weekend shows in New York. I never did burn out. But it didn't think about anymore after that work."



Out-born performer Ick Broadway. But four seasons in, he's still a key player on *Queer as Folk*—in fact, the *Washington Post* raved, after season one, that Armstrong gave the strongest performance of the series.

His character Blake changed to a crystal red accent, but a new, dazed education counsellor. It's a role that has had major off-sides. The agent was approached by the British Columbia Organisation Youthquake—which helps teens struggling with sexual identity (YHS)—to act as a spokesperson. "They sought us out because of the merchandise between Blake and what these people were referring to at the camp in centres," says Armstrong. "I don't think totally like life and make reference to the drug presence of my character at the end of the first season." "You see, Blake couldn't deal with it, couldn't live it. He doesn't deal with it, couldn't live it." "You don't expect your art to have that kind of impact." For Armstrong, who also has a teaching degree, speaking up for gay youth may be his most important role to date. SHAWNA HIGGS

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MACLEAN'S



## Exhibit | The looming ghost of Rocket Richard



The CMC celebrates  
Richard's folk  
heritage with this  
1955 alternative to  
Cadillac's coupe.

for buying a license. The stock process came to be seen as an early sign of the deeper discontent that blossomed into Quebec's Quiet Revolution a few years later. One post-riot artifact in the museum's display cases is a can of Bock or Richard's tomato soup, marketed as an alternative for those no longer willing to buy the Campbell's brand (even though the valiant NHL boss had no family link to the famous souper-seller).

Sheldon Posen, the exhibition's curator, reaches for a barbed analogy to capture the way Richard, in 2000, embodied both soldier

to achieve more and cultural significance. "I want Bobo Roth and Jackie Robinson were the same guy." And Ian Rhee or Robert Williams for Americans, Richard's iconic status shows no signs of fading in Canada. His favourite No. 9 is worn by a girl playing their way on the five-dollar bill. *Shawn Tully* reported a mail-order exposure update in last year's *Jumps*, also listed it in the museum for the show. The genuine article is on display, too. Richard's last game was seen in a glass case at the end of the display. He'd had a tear in the left shoulder mended, a tiny final reminder that Maurice Richard played hard.

JAMES GLENN

RECEIVED 15 JULY 2003



John Intini starts a sentence...  
Scott Thompson finishes it

Seems Thompson may be best known for his stereotypical, flamboyantly gay character Buddy Cole from *The Nuts in the Hat*, but lately he's been getting big laughs by just being himself—for example, he recently gave *Comedians of Color* a hilarious

That will help make him feel guilty.  
MY FONDEST CHILDHOOD MEMOR  
BRAMPTON, ONT., ... we hanging  
the creek. When I was little I used  
told there was an entrance to Narnia  
and I saved all my tree-lookers for

- 1. Some part of the Toronto-based comedy troupe *The Gays*.
- 2. Guest starred as an RCMP-wielding cop on the *The Slapface with Michael W. York* video.
- 3. Plays the lawyer of gay Delirious, Quid, from hours 141 in the upcoming CTV movie, *Prison Jitters*.

**THE ONE THING NOBODY KNOWS ABOUT RUOOF COLE WAS...** that he was half-French.

**MY STRATEGY FOR DEALING WITH BULLIES...** is to make sure when he hit me the wound is visible.

THE (DR. AGOR) WASH I WRITE ...  
was "Why did the chicken cross  
the road?"  
WHEN WORKING A TOUGH CROWD  
... I, like almost all comedians,  
start swearing. When we get  
scared four-letter words come  
easily.  
IF I COULD GIVE ANYONE A MAKE-  
OVER ... I'd pick Janet Jackson's  
left breast since there's already  
something somewhat wrong with

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**Books** | Food for thought, if not for actual eating

[illegible]

## Best Sellers

## Fiction

- |     |   |   |
|-----|---|---|
| 1.  | THE DA VINCI CODE, Dan Brown (44)                                   | 3 |
| 2.  | THE PRINCE OF INGLAND, Sebastian Faulks (46)                        | 3 |
| 3.  | THE TIME PEOPLE TWO MEET IN INGLAND, John Galsworthy (48)           | 3 |
| 4.  | THE CYCLOPS INCIDENT OF THE END OF THE NIGHT TRAIN, Kate Mosse (50) | 3 |
| 5.  | THE LAST LIGHT OF THE SUN, Jay McInerney (52)                       | 3 |
| 6.  | COME WIGGINS, Neil Gaiman (54)                                      | 3 |
| 7.  | ANGEL'S ESCAPE, Bernard Cornwell (56)                               | 3 |
| 8.  | THE LAST GARDEN, Ian McEwan (58)                                    | 3 |
| 9.  | OUR COMMON FUTURE, Nicky Katt (60)                                  | 3 |
| 10. | ROBBING BRATS, Bruce Gold (62)                                      | 3 |

## Non-fiction

- [illegible]

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## IF YOU DON'T KNOW JACK...

Yes, Jack Layton is a media hog—but his ideas are still worth hearing

**THERE MUST** be an election in the air. Everybody's playing *Definition*.

Most Canadians, no fools, pay little attention to political leaders between elections. Then we wonder who these guys polling at one another are. Knowing this, leaders spend a lot of time defining one another, usually in unflattering ways.

Paul Martin has already set to work defining Stephen Harper, the Conservative leader. (Martin arrives periodically late to the task, having spent his first few months in the

bagchat defining Jean Chrétien.) Harper's busy defining Martin. But Jack Layton has set out to define himself. It's novel, anyway.

Over the next few days, the nation's bookshops should be returning copies of *Defining Our Ideas: What I Want for Canada*. Layton, the newish New Democratic leader, is the author. He's also the subject. The subject, of course, is the looming election campaign. Talks about the NDP having at about twice the level of support it won in the 2000 federal election, which was disastrous for that party. New Democrats would like their numbers to be higher still. And with Martin and Harper gaining most of the daily press, Layton has decided to try his luck between hard covers.

Authority isn't new to Layton, who wrote a book on homelessness while he was a Toronto city councillor. But it's unusual in Canadian politics. Politicians in France write books all the time. Even in the United States, campaign books have lately become de rigueur, even if it's worth your life to wade through one of them (did anyone read the Bill Clinton classic, *Between Hope and History*? Me neither).

But you can see why Layton is eager to give long-form self-promotion a shot. His almost ritual attraction to the nearest camera or boom microphone has earned him a reputation as some ordes for superb clarity. He's the kind of guy Quebecers call a "bad mouk"—but in some ways that's unfair. He's the only national party leader with a Ph.D. (from York University)



He's about as fluent in French as Paul Martin. He held a bunch of important jobs at Toronto council, a larger government than some provinces.

But he's No. 3 among national leaders, so he has to try harder. When Stephen Harper's pay went self-definition certain to proclaiming his name with zero time in TV ads (PM's name—see photo—HAR-pot), Layton points on the page.

His general theme is in the pursuit tradition of Canadian social democracy: if government isn't doing something, it's not going down. "Power has been slipping away from Canadians," he writes. "Have you noticed?" For at least ten years, we've been told we cannot build anything because we have no financial capacity to do so.

Why? Because governments are hiring "corporate executives"—a term Layton uses a lot—instead of ordinary people.

This is a book-length argument for bigger government, a notion that's been in bad

odour in the nation's papers for a while. Layton offers surprise that "not one politician who is caught up in this corporate drift says, 'We should prioritize or do more with less' when it's about the military. Why, then, do these same people say we should prioritize and cut health care, education, or environmental protection?"

I'm tempted to answer that it's because we've already been doing less with less with the military for most of Layton's life. But at least that's not an argument. It's hard to argue with, say, Paul Martin, who will soon be coming to your door in person to tell you that whatever's on your mind is a critical national priority.

Layton's book is full of detail, sometimes memorably so. (*Actual quote*: "... job creation in the field of the enhancement of wetlands, wetlands, mountains, and diverse and aquatic ecosystems. What an exciting prospect.") It's also full of earnest idealism. Layton says his work's helped help Layton learn about failures in environmental protection and health care.

His solutions to these problems and so many more are spelled out in detail through the narrative. This isn't a campaign plan; first, that'll come later. But you can tell where he's headed: a national school meal program, a "well-funded educational program" to clean up the Great Lakes, programs to keep jobs in Canada, inspired by "the excellent work of Maude Barlow and the Council of Canadians.") could go on. Layton says: "The reality is that everything he suggests has already been shown to 'work' as he sees it, somewhere in the world.

Very few people who have never voted NDP will be moved by Layton's book. But that's not what he's up to. Harper and Martin are trying to broaden their constituencies with vague promises. Layton wants to create the NDP base without. Unfolding this, he's zigging where the others zig.

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